

Reagan smears Nicaragua to justify U.S. aggression

Socialist urges big protest on April 20

The following is a statement by **Andrea González**, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York.

Since 1981 Washington has been waging a "covert" war against Nicaragua. Reagan's recent open declaration that the U.S. government's aim is to overthrow the government of Nicaragua represents a qualitative escalation of the threats against that country.

It is barely short of a formal declaration of war. And it gives added urgency to

As the *Militant* goes to press, Nicaraguan Pres. Daniel Ortega has announced a new series of proposals for negotiations with Washington. See story page 10.

building the April 20 antiwar demonstrations in Washington, D.C., and on the West Coast.

Supporters of my campaign and all the other Socialist Workers campaigns for local and state offices around the country will be redoubling their efforts to build these actions. The April 20 demonstrations for peace, jobs, and justice — supported by a broad coalition of peace, labor, civil rights, religious, and solidarity organizations — are an important opportunity to

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Funeral for Sandinista in Managua, Nicaragua. U.S.-organized war of terror, which has killed thousands of Nicaraguan workers and peasants, is aimed at overthrowing popular government.

Militant/Michael Baumann

Black Nicaraguan speaks in Harlem

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

NEW YORK — "I want to thank everyone whose protests made my release possible," Nicaraguan legislator Ray Hooker told an outdoor meeting in Harlem February 23.

Hooker, a Black member of Nicaragua's newly elected National Assembly, was shot and kidnapped by CIA-organized counterrevolutionaries last fall while campaigning for the Sandinista National Liberation Front slate on Nicaragua's northern Atlantic Coast. International protests saved his life and forced his release after several weeks in captivity.

Hooker's visit to this impoverished Black and Latino ghetto was an important part of a month-long speaking tour he is making of the United States, aimed at getting out the truth about the Nicaraguan revolution.

The meeting here was originally scheduled to be held in the auditorium of Harlem Hospital. But in a display of what capitalist politicians in the United States really think about the free speech and democratic rights they falsely claim are lacking in Nicaragua, everyone was turned away at the door. "Mayor Koch apparently told the guards not to let anyone in for this meeting," Bob Rush, one of the organizers of the New York leg of the tour, told the crowd gathered outside.

The meeting went ahead anyway, on the sidewalk outside the hospital. At it, and at a news conference the day before, Hooker explained the steps Nicaragua's revolutionary government is taking to protect the national, economic, and cultural rights of the country's historically oppressed Indian and Black populations.

"A national commission," Hooker said, "has been set up for the establishment of an autonomous government for our Black people, for the Miskitos, the Sumos, the

Ramas, for the regions where these people live."

The object is to "give them political power," Hooker said. "But you can't have political power alone. It must always be accompanied by economic clout. So they'll also have economic control over the natural resources of their region."

In the economy, as in nearly every other sphere of life, there has already been a night-and-day change from the situation under the Washington-backed Somoza dic-

tatorship. "Before the revolution," Hooker explained, "practically everything that was produced in the Atlantic Coast region went to Managua," Nicaragua's capital city. "Now it's not so. Now the central government is investing much more in the region than the region produces."

Because of the way the region was systematically plundered, such large-scale aid may have to continue for 20 years or more. Hooker said. "But the aim, and not only

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United Mine Workers protests union-busting move in W. Va.

BY DAVE SALNER

CHARLESTON, W. Va. — Hundreds of United Mine Workers union (UMW) members and their supporters demonstrated peacefully at the entrance to the Sprouse Creek Processing Plant from February 18 to 22. The UMW members are striking this plant, which is located in Lobata, West Virginia, and is a subsidiary of the notorious A.T. Massey Coal Co. Massey is on a brutal union-busting drive.

Early that week, demonstrations of 800 union members staved off Sprouse Creek's demands that their employees go back to work without a contract or be fired. In the first three days of the week union mobilizations grew in size and confidence, reaching 1,500 by February 20. They consisted of both peaceful mass demonstrations and nonviolent civil disobedience by smaller groups.

More than 120 UMW members, miners' wives, and widows had been arrested by February 22 for sitting-in at the road to the plant. They were trying to prevent coal

from nearby Massey mines from being trucked in to be cleaned and processed for the market. All those arrested were freed on their personal recognizance.

A.T. Massey is the sixth largest coal producer in the nation and is spearheading the coal operators' drive against the UMW. In recent years it has succeeded in opening nonunion mines in both West Virginia and Kentucky, which has made Massey infamous and despised in coal communities throughout Appalachia.

The 48 employees at Sprouse Creek are among 2,600 union members nationally on strike against Massey. Since Oct. 1, 1984, the UMW struck Massey's unionized mines and preparation plants that have refused to sign the national contract between the union and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

Although some of Massey's unionized subsidiaries have signed the national UMW-BCOA contract, Massey claims that each of its subsidiaries is an "independent

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Big business responsible for farm crisis

BY DOUG JENNESS

It is difficult to remember a time when there has been so much public attention riveted on the plight of U.S. farmers. Television runs special features and documentaries on farmers. *Time* and *Newsweek* carry cover stories; the daily newspapers publish lengthy series; Hollywood has put out three movies; and Congress is making this issue the center of debate.

Sharpening conflict

Behind the avalanche of publicity is the sharpening conflict between working farmers, who face their worst crisis since the 1930s, and the Reagan administration, which proposes tightening the screws on farmers, thus accelerating the rate at which they will be driven off their farms. About 1,000 farm families a week are presently being forced out of farming.

Agriculture Secretary John Block revealed February 22 the details of a farm bill that would drastically reduce farm price supports and subsidies and eventually eliminate direct government loans to farmers. If implemented the measures would be the most severe governmental attack on farmers in 50 years. In response, tens of thousands of farmers throughout the country are mobilizing in protest demonstrations.

Much of the coverage in the big business news media is calculated to try to turn the working class against farmers, thus robbing them of a potentially powerful ally in their fight for measures which can bring relief. Two of the most repeated arguments raised as part of this divisive effort are:

1. It's natural and correct that the number of farmers decreases as the productivity of labor on the farms increases; and
2. Taxpayers can't be expected to keep footing the bill for price supports and farm-credit programs.

By examining these contentions closely we can see how thoroughly fallacious they are.

Regarding the inevitability of working farmers leaving the land, the *Washington Post*, a prominent mouthpiece for the handful of ruling families that run this country, declared in a February 15 editorial:

"The question for public policy isn't whether people are going to be pushed out of farming. That's been going on since the years before World War I, and with the steady rise in farm productivity it's not going to stop now. For half a century the federal government has provided shock absorbers to slow this process and to make it less painful. But those shock absorbers are expensive."

Natural law?

The exodus of millions of farmers from the land is presented as if it were a *natural* process obeying Charles Darwin's law of natural selection. In a never-ending struggle for survival only the fittest survive. This is the way it has been and the way it will continue to be, it is assumed.

The truth, however, is that working farmers are not the victims of natural laws but of political and social policy. They are being forced off the land against their will by the big bankers and merchants backed up by the government.

One North Carolina farmer interviewed in the *Greensboro News and Record* explained that she thought the movie *Country* was generally a realistic portrayal of the condition of farmers except for one thing. "I think the problem with the FmHA [Farmers Home Administration] and cre-

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—SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE—

BY JOHN NAUBERT

NEW YORK — *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* sales teams have been selling at the Eagle Electric company in Long Island City, Queens, for about two years. Eagle is located in the most industrialized sector of New York City.

There is a continuous turnover of workers at Eagle because the pay is low and plant management is on a permanent campaign of harassment and victimization of the workers, who are organized by the United Auto Workers. Many have been fired and others have been forced to quit. Two years ago, for example, the company fired some 600 workers in less than a year on the phony charge that they had falsified their job applications at the time they were hired.

One result of these turnovers is

that the work force at Eagle is rapidly changing. There used to be a lot of workers from Eastern Europe at the plant, but now the majority of workers are Black, Latino, and Caribbean, with a high percentage of women production workers.

Supporters of the Communist Party also distribute their newspaper at Eagle. They frequently bring large bundles of the *Daily World* and give them away like leaflets.

We haven't been able to maintain weekly sales of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* at the plant, but are working to make that happen, especially since we have found a good response to socialist ideas among these workers. During the U.S. government's threats against Nicaragua last fall over a nonexistent shipment of

MIG fighter jets from the Soviet Union, we sold four *Militants* and four *Perspectiva Mundials* at one plant-gate sale. The workers were familiar with both publications and wanted to read what they had to say about the war in Central America.

This political interest led our sales team to experiment with sales of socialist pamphlets and books at the plant gate. We didn't set up a table, but laid plastic on the sidewalk to keep the books dry, which worked pretty well. This helped us have political discussions with workers who stopped to look at the literature. The most popular books have been those about Malcolm X.

We don't sell books every time we have a literature display, but we often get encouraging comments from workers. Recently a



Militant/John Naubert

Sales team member Jim Watson talking to interested Eagle Electric worker.

Latino worker hurrying into work quickly looked over the literature and saw books by Lenin. "Lenin is good," he said, as he entered the plant.

While one person on our team

usually concentrates on giving out leaflets about socialist meetings, or statements by socialist candidates for public office, the others concentrate on selling the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Vietnamese, Kampuchean troops beat back rightists

BY WILL REISSNER

NEW YORK — The workers and peasants of Indochina and the entire world won an important victory with the recent routing of armed Kampuchean counterrevolutionaries. They were driven from their camps inside Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia) across the border into Thailand. The last major rightist military camp was captured February 14 by a joint force of Vietnamese and Kampuchean government troops.

On February 21 a Vietnamese diplomat in New York announced that a fourth annual partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from neighboring Kampuchea will take place within months.

Vietnamese troops entered Kampuchea in December 1978 to help insurgents there overthrow the murderous regime headed by Pol Pot. During its less than four years in power, Pol Pot's government was responsible for the deaths of several million Kampucheans through execution, starvation, and disease.

The Vietnamese forces have remained in Kampuchea to protect the country against a return by Pol Pot's followers, who retreated to guerrilla bases in remote areas straddling Kampuchea's border with Thailand. Through Thailand, Pol Pot has received huge quantities of military and non-military aid from the governments of Thailand, Singapore, China, and the United States.

Pol Pot's forces have continually attacked Kampuchea from their border camps in an attempt to prevent the reconstruction of Kampuchean society and the consolidation of the new government.

As Kampuchea's armed forces have grown more able to defend the country, Vietnam has withdrawn large contingents of its own troops. The latest withdrawal follows a tremendously successful dry-season offensive by Kampuchean and Vietnamese forces against the rightist guerrilla camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border.

Since the start of the offensive in

November, virtually every major counter-revolutionary camp has been captured and the guerrillas have fled to Thailand.

Kampuchean troops are expected to remain in the bases formerly controlled by Pol Pot and his coalition partner Son Sann even after the dry season ends in May.

By contrast, in previous years Kampuchean and Vietnamese troops pulled back from the border during the rainy season.

The growing strength of Kampuchean troops was seen in the fighting that led to the capture of Pol Pot's headquarters in the mountainous Phnom Malai area straddling the Thai-Kampuchean border.

In previous dry-season operations, no attacks had been launched against Phnom Malai because the terrain is unfavorable for the tanks and artillery of regular units of the Vietnamese army.

This year, however, the Kampuchean armed forces were able to provide infantry and special forces units to take part in the capture of the Pol Pot base.

The defeat of the counterrevolutionary coalition — which includes former Prince Norodom Sihanouk as well as Pol Pot and Son Sann — has been a severe blow to the coalition's international backers.

For six years the rightist guerrillas have been showered with military, financial, and political backing from the pro-imperialist Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN — Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Brunei) and from Peking and Washington.

The bulk of the military aid has come from Thailand, Singapore, and China, while Washington contributes nonmilitary aid and diplomatic and political support. Without that aid from abroad, the Kampuchean counterrevolutionaries would have collapsed long ago.

The Kampuchean and Vietnamese governments have repeatedly proposed a political solution to the conflict in Kampuchea.

Most recently, a January 17-18 meeting of the foreign ministers of Kampuchea,

Laos, and Vietnam proposed a paired withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and elimination of Pol Pot's forces, free elections with the presence of foreign observers, and an agreement by all countries in the region not to let their territory be used for attacks against another country.

Thailand, in particular, has promoted military operations against its neighbors. In addition to giving aid and sanctuary to the Kampuchean counterrevolutionaries, the Thai government has helped Laotian

and Vietnamese counterrevolutionary groups to operate from Thai territory.

A Vietnamese diplomat expressed the view that there is a growing trend toward a dialogue on Kampuchea between the ASEAN members and the three countries of Indochina — Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos.

If the ASEAN countries want a dialogue, the diplomat emphasized, "they will find us forthcoming."

Nicaraguan farmers tour U.S.

BY JOHN GAIGE

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Representatives of the Nicaraguan Farmers and Ranchers Union (UNAG) will be touring some farm regions in the United States in March. These areas include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Texas.

Juan and Piedad Tijerino, the UNAG representatives, are grain and cattle producers. Juan was elected to Nicaragua's National Assembly last fall, and Piedad is also a guitarist and singer.

The Tijerinos will be speaking on the agricultural reform in Nicaragua, UNAG's role in it, and the impact of the U.S. government-organized war by counterrevolutionaries on Nicaragua since the overthrow of the Somoza regime in 1979.

The purpose of the tour is to speak with family farmers in countryside meetings; tour a variety of farms, including grain, dairy, hog, and beef farms; visit agricultural schools; and meet representatives of unions and churches, as well as antiwar activists.

Farmers in the Midwest who have recently traveled to Nicaragua to study the revolution's agricultural reform have been actively organizing this solidarity tour for the UNAG representatives. Most were participants on a tour that was in Nicaragua

January 5-20, which was sponsored by Oxfam, the North American Farm Alliance, and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives.

These farmers saw that the Nicaraguan government has not only carried out a broad agricultural reform, but has promoted the organization of farmers into their own independent organization. U.S. farmers learned that Nicaraguan farmers get land; access to credit; access to seeds, pesticides, fertilizers, and machinery; as well as technical assistance.

They learned that in Nicaragua farmers are encouraged to produce and stay on the land.

This contrasts sharply with the plight of working farmers in this country, where an escalating farm crisis is driving nearly 1,600 farmers off the land each week. The farmers who toured Nicaragua believe agricultural producers in both countries need to discuss how the Nicaraguan revolution has aided farmers there and why farmers here have a stake in fighting to end the U.S. war against Nicaragua.

The Midwest host of the UNAG tour is the North American Farm Alliance. The Tijerinos will be in Minnesota March 7-10, Wisconsin March 11-14, Iowa March 15-18, and Texas March 19-21.

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Socialist candidate scores U.S. war

Continued from front page

protest U.S. intervention in Central America, especially the latest threats against Nicaragua.

Over the last week, U.S. government spokespeople have made more and more bellicose attacks on Nicaragua. Secretary of State George Shultz declared that Nicaragua "has fallen behind the Iron Curtain" and that Washington has a "moral duty" to reverse this. President Reagan dubbed the CIA-funded counterrevolutionary terrorists "our brothers" and "freedom fighters." He accused the Sandinista government of imposing a "brutal dictatorship" on the Nicaraguan people. Reagan called for the removal of the Nicaraguan government unless they "say uncle" to the U.S. imperialists and their mercenary forces.

This racist, arrogant, saber-rattling propaganda is designed to prepare public opinion in the United States and internationally for stepped-up U.S. military intervention in Central America.

The U.S. government already has 4,500 troops on the Nicaraguan-Honduran border. It is steadily increasing its military support for the dictatorship in neighboring El Salvador.

These increasingly warlike statements against Nicaragua are also part of a public campaign by the Reagan administration to win congressional support for \$14 million in "covert" aid for the U.S.-backed mercenaries. Congressional liberals have distanced themselves from the most extreme of these statements. While declaring their opposition to "covert" aid, however, these liberals call on the administration to find other, more "acceptable," methods by which to bring the Nicaraguan people to their knees.

Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega announced on February 27 a new series of proposals to Washington, offered by the Nicaraguan government to "encourage the reduction of tensions" and "open the road to peace." Every previous attempt by Nicaragua to reverse the escalation of the war has been rebuffed by Washington.

To win support among working people



Andrea González (right), Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City, campaigns to get out truth about U.S. government's war against Nicaragua.

for its war, the U.S. government is carrying out a sustained campaign of lies and slanders against the Nicaraguan revolution.

Reagan claims that the U.S. government, together with the *contras*, were champions of the revolution against the Somoza dictatorship that Nicaragua's workers and peasants overthrew in 1979. He says that the Sandinistas have betrayed the revolution and imposed a "brutal" and "cruel" regime.

Nothing could be further from the truth. It was the U.S. government that installed the Somoza dictatorship to begin with. It was known as the bloodiest regime in Latin America. Washington supported Somoza and his brutal repression of the Nicaraguan people up to the very end.

Reagan's "brothers," the *contras*, are led by Somoza's murderous National Guard. Trained and organized by Washington, these torturers were the defenders of the dictatorship.

Far from betraying the revolution, the

Sandinistas are leading it forward, true to its goals of putting the needs and interests of the workers and peasants first.

When I visited Nicaragua, I saw the workers and peasants government encouraging and supporting the unionization of workers and giving land to the small farmers. I saw the people learning to read and write; women gaining their rights; and child-care centers, schools, and hospitals being built for the first time in the history of that country.

During my visit I also saw the destruction carried out by the *contras*, including burned down child-care centers, daily funerals for their young victims. I heard the countless stories of kidnappings, torture, rape, and murder of teachers, farmers, and other workers at the hands of Reagan's "freedom fighters."

The only cruelty and brutality in Nicaragua is being carried out by the CIA-paid terrorists.

At the same time that Reagan was call-

ing for the overthrow of the popular Nicaraguan government, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne Motley was visiting Chile. Chile is a brutal military dictatorship. U.S. government officials, however, say that "they don't want the U.S. to interfere in the internal affairs of Chile." That's because, unlike in Nicaragua, Chile is still under the yoke of U.S. bankers and businessmen. This underlines that what Washington hates about Nicaragua is not some alleged "totalitarianism." Rather it is the fact that the Nicaraguan revolution broke the stranglehold of U.S. imperialism and brought dignity, democracy, economic gains, and self-determination to working people there.

The U.S. government also charges that Nicaragua is receiving arms from the Soviet Union and Cuba to build an offensive military machine to threaten the United States and the entire region.

But the 3 million people of Nicaragua are no threat to the United States. The U.S. government, however, is a threat to Nicaragua. It has organized and funded the mercenary army. It is supplying and directing their military actions, which have cost the lives of 7,000 people.

Nicaragua, like all sovereign nations, has the right to defend itself from this aggression. It has the right to receive arms from any country that will supply them. It has the right to organize and arm its people to defend itself against this war.

There is no question that war is raging in Central America. But it is Washington that is fueling it. It is Washington, not Moscow or Havana, that has dozens of military bases throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. It is the U.S. Army that has invaded and occupied countries in the region. It is Washington that has organized coups against popularly elected governments and replaced them with brutal dictators like Pinochet in Chile. And it is the U.S. government that has plans to deploy nuclear arms in Latin America.

Nicaraguan president Ortega answered Reagan's latest attacks at a meeting honoring the mothers of those who have been killed in the war. He accused Reagan of carrying out "war, terrorism, and aggression against the people of Nicaragua."

As working people we have a stake in ending Washington's "war, terrorism, and aggression."

The April 20 antiwar actions are an opportunity to mobilize working people through their unions — as well as farmers, Blacks, Latinos, women, and youth — to oppose the escalating U.S. war in Central America.

End the U.S. war against Nicaragua!

End U.S. intervention in Central America!

All out April 20!

N.Y. socialist backs fire fighters

BY HARRY RING

NEW YORK — Andrea González, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City, denounced Mayor Edward Koch's attempt to use the city fire fighters' rejection of a concession contract to force all city unions into binding arbitration at a February 22 press conference here. She called on all working people to stand with the fire fighters in their fight for a decent contract.

The city fire fighters' union delegates, by a vote of 327 to 50, had rejected the Koch administration's proposed three-year contract on February 15. The contract had called for an inadequate wage increase for those already working and a wage freeze for newly hired workers.

"Mayor Koch," González said, had "solved" the city's fiscal crisis on the backs of the city's working people. While he gave millions in tax breaks to real estate developers, he forced concession contracts on the city unions and allowed essential social services to deteriorate. Today he is continuing to attack the unions.

"Fire fighters and all city workers have been working without a contract since last year. Koch has refused to negotiate with the unions. And now he is trying to use the rejection of the contract by the fire fighters to force binding arbitration on all the unions. This is an attempt to weaken the unions' right to bargain collectively," González said.

"The wage freeze for newly hired workers proposed in the contract is an attempt to introduce the two-tier wage system into the city's fire department." If the contract had been accepted, González continued, it would have set a precedent to introduce this system into all city contracts. In rejecting this contract, fire fighters rejected this attempt to divide and weaken the union, said González.

González also attacked Mayor Koch's support for racist violence. "He hails racist vigilante Bernhard Goetz. And the mayor defends killer cops that murder Blacks and Puerto Ricans."

González explained that Koch was the representative of the city's ruling bankers and businessmen. Carol Bellamy and Herman Farrell, Koch's opponents for the Democratic Party's mayoral nomination, "have no fundamentally different program than Koch. It is no accident they are in the same party since they all represent the same class, the capitalist class," declared González.

"This party has been running the city in

the interest of the capitalist class for decades. It is responsible for the problems working people face in this city."

González called for independent political action by the city's working people and Black and Puerto Rican communities. And she pointed to the upcoming April 20 Washington, D.C., demonstration against the U.S. war in Central America as one example of effective political action New York's working people can participate in.

González telegrams S. African freedom fighter

The following message was sent to Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned leader of the African National Congress of South Africa, by Andrea González, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City.

In early February the government of South African president Pieter Botha had proposed releasing Mandela from prison if he would renounce the struggle against apartheid. Mandela rejected the "offer."

Dear Brother Mandela,
Please accept my warmest revolutionary greetings.

Your dedication to the struggle for the liberation of your people is an example to all who fight for freedom and justice. I know, as a Puerto Rican whose country struggles under the yoke of U.S. imperialism and whose people are strangers in our own land, that you are a powerful inspiration.

Your refusal of Botha's phony freedom offer, after 23 years in prison, has exposed once again the racist and repressive regime of South Africa before the peoples of the world. The 9,000 people gathered in the Black township of Soweto who cheered when they heard your daughter Zinzi read your refusal to exchange your freedom for theirs is testimony to the fighting spirit

your action has sparked anew among the people.

The struggle of the Black majority in South Africa also helps rip off the hypocritical mask of the U.S. government, revealing it for what it is — the center of international terrorism against the peoples of the world. It puts a spotlight on the real U.S. foreign policy — support for the racist regime in your country in its repression of the Black majority and war against the free workers and farmers of Nicaragua who are building a new society.

The struggle in South Africa has also inspired working people in the United States to fight against their government's foreign policy. Each day, in cities around the country, there are picket lines outside the South African embassy and consulates. The members of my party have been part of these actions. These picket lines include leaders of the Black, women's rights, and trade union movements, who have carried out civil disobedience actions in protest against apartheid and the U.S. government's support for it.

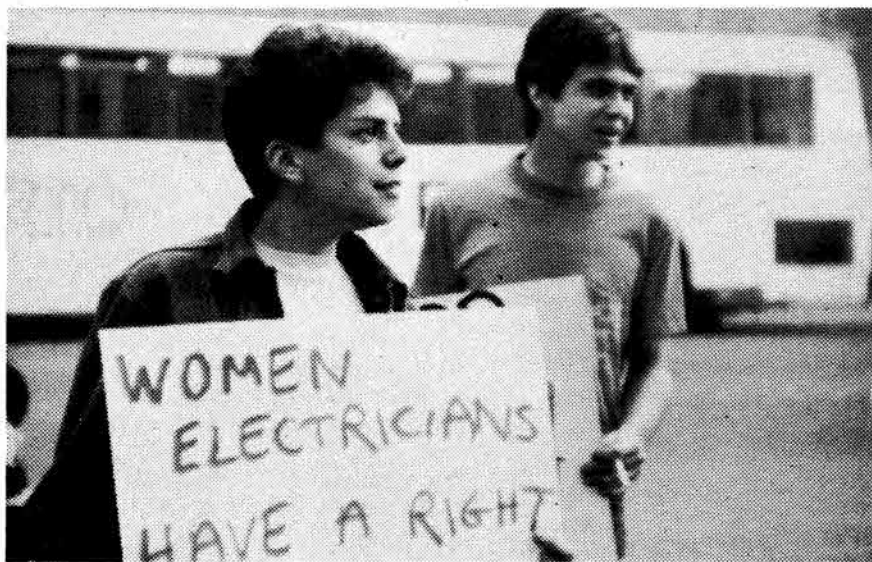
These protests have helped to push forward national demonstrations for jobs, peace, and justice which will take place on April 20. Tens of thousands of people will gather in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities on that date to protest the U.S. government's inter-

vention in Central America and its support for apartheid. I know that you will be on the minds of many of the protesters that day.

In solidarity,
Andrea González



Nelson Mandela



Sally Goodman, left, joins picket at Denver Defense Investigative Service in support of her right to job. DIS is using phony security investigation in witch-hunt.

Pentagon 'security' cops advise denying clearance to woman electrician

BY DUNCAN WILLIAMS

DENVER — After more than two years of investigation and harassment, the Defense Investigative Service (DIS) has recommended that Sally Goodman's security clearance be suspended. This move marks a new stage in the government's witch-hunt against Goodman, a 26-year-old union activist and antiwar fighter.

One of only three female electricians in the plant, Goodman has worked since November 1980 at the Martin Marietta facility here, which produces war materiel for the Pentagon. In the normal course of doing her job, she got a security clearance in June 1981.

In September 1982 Goodman was summoned to a meeting with representatives of the DIS, the Defense Department cop agency charged with making life difficult for employees at plants that do work for the Pentagon. At this meeting and in subsequent "interviews," the DIS Special Agents told Goodman she was being investigated because of allegations that she is 1. a member of the Young Socialist Alliance, 2. "at least an associate of known members of the Socialist Workers Party," and 3. a lesbian.

'Threat to national security'

The Pentagon believes that anyone with socialist ideas is a threat to national security, although the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance are legal political organizations that violate no laws of the United States.

The warmakers feel that gays are "perverted" and can't be trusted with government secrets; also, that they can be blackmailed because of their personal lives. However, the only blackmail in this case has been by the Department of Defense threatening to get Goodman fired if she doesn't cooperate in their degrading investigation.

In the course of a lengthy interrogation in 1983, DIS agents asked questions such as: "Can you describe the general types or characterization of individuals with whom you have participated in homosexual acts and whether or not these relationships were of a lasting nature or were they numerous transient liaisons through chance meetings?"; "Have you travelled outside the United States?"; "Do you support the principle of democratic centralism?"

This outrageous, unconstitutional prying is not just a violation of Goodman's privacy, it is also a violation of the DIS's own guidelines and federal court decisions, which prohibit investigation on sexual orientation or political activities or affiliation.

Sally Goodman refused to answer these questions in order to protect her constitutional rights, her privacy, and her self-respect. In April 1984 the DIS requested a second interview.

Goodman indicated her willingness to cooperate and answer all relevant questions. She requested a list of questions to which she could respond in writing. This the DIS refused to provide. So now the DIS has recommended her security clearance be suspended.

While the government has raised the stakes in this battle with a direct threat to revoke Goodman's security clearance, Goodman and her supporters have received new ammunition in their fight to turn back this attack. Soon after the government's latest move, Goodman was able to get hold of the DIS's investigative files on her. With these files, and the damning informa-

tion they contain, the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), which is coordinating support efforts, is in a much better position to move forward in the Goodman case.

What the files show

The files confirm the antiunion character of the whole investigation. One of Goodman's coworkers, obviously with the prompting of DIS agents, is quoted as saying she "appears to be more knowledgeable of union activities than ... the normal worker is."

A foreman considered Goodman "disruptive on the job because she frequently discusses union problems with other MMC employees who should be working." Goodman filed four grievances against this particular foreman (and won three of them). Perhaps this explains why he questioned her "loyalty, honesty, and trustworthiness."

Second, the entire basis for the DIS campaign against Sally Goodman began to fall apart during the course of the investigation. The general result of the record checks and interviews were "favorable." Security files at Martin Marietta reflected "no unfavorable information."

In an entry in Goodman's file, one agent submitted that "The issue of HER alleged homosexuality is not a matter of any great interest to me, as several sources expressed the opinion that SHE may be a lesbian and has spoken publicly in favor of gay rights. SHE claimed that SHE was not subject to blackmail or coercion because of anything in HER personal life, which should also include HER sexual preference, and based upon what I have read ... I agree with that assessment."

He goes on to note that "We have not proved that subject has established a sympathetic association with any person who advocates the use of force or violence to overthrow the government by unconstitutional means ... nor have we proved any membership or activity 'knowingly' in sympathy with or in support of persons who instigate, conspire or foment the commission of acts to deny other persons their rights under the Constitution or who seek to alter our govt by force or violence or other unconstitutional means."

In other words, a big zero.

In fact the basis of the recommendation to revoke her clearance is that Goodman has not complied fully with the DIS in their investigation by giving "full, frank, and truthful answers to relevant questions." Of course this, too, is false.

Impact of support

Finally, it is apparent from the DIS's own files that the national campaign organized by PRDF in support of Goodman's rights has caused the DIS great concern and has hemmed them in at every turn. In one entry, an agent observes, "It is recognized that this case is very controversial and because SUBJECT's [Goodman's] case has been highly publicized and SHE is represented by THE ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] maybe this case should be forwarded" to another branch of the Defense Department.

At numerous points recommendations to suspend her clearance were postponed or deferred. The case was eventually referred all the way to the top echelons of the DIS, Director Thomas J. O'Brien and the agency's general counsel.

From the beginning, DIS's investigation has had nothing to do with "national security." Its purpose was to harass and intimi-

date Goodman and isolate her from her coworkers. Ultimately its target was all workers at Martin Marietta and their union, United Auto Workers Local 766. As the tiny handful of ruling families in the United States, and their government, drive ahead with their war in Central America, and their antilabor campaign at home, they must attempt to stifle and cut off opposition to those policies among working people, especially in the labor movement.

The government harassment aims to weaken the unions. Spies and finks are cultivated or planted within the union ranks. Simple questioning by DIS agents creates a climate of fear and distrust among union members. By going after socialist, pro-union fighters first, the DIS hopes to advance its overall union-busting campaign.

Goodman was targeted because she is an outspoken activist in her union. She helped organize her local's participation in the September 1981 Solidarity Day demonstration called by the AFL-CIO, and in other labor actions. She has spoken up for solidarity with other unions on strike, such as the air traffic controllers and the United Mine Workers in their 1981 strike.

She participates in her union's women's committee and was sent by her local to a May 19, 1984, United Auto Workers International Women's Department meeting.

She has also been singled out by the DIS and the company because she is a woman, and a fighter for equality.

Goodman also speaks out against the government's war in Central America.

Goodman's union filed two grievances on her behalf. One pointed out that coworkers "had been questioned about her in an intimidating and hostile manner. The people conducting these interviews implied possible illegal activities and subversive conduct by Ms. Goodman. This constitutes harassment of a union member by the company since it happened on company property in a closed company office and on company time. We recognize that this investigation is a result of her ... activities in the Local union 766 UAW."

It went on to demand that "this investigation be stopped immediately, that Ms. Goodman not be harassed further, that

other company employees and union members not be involved further. We demand access to all files and interviews conducted. We also demand that the company issue a written apology, clearing Ms. Goodman of any wrongdoing or illegal activity."

Although the union's grievances were subsequently denied, this support has been central to the fight against the government's harassment.

Most recently, at the February 9 meeting of her UAW local, Goodman was introduced by the local president so she could present the latest developments in her case. She described the government harassment and the new information contained in DIS files. When she finished, her coworkers gave an enthusiastic show of support.

Important support won

Supporters of Goodman's case also took the defense campaign to a broader audience of labor officials, women's rights activists, civil libertarians, gay and lesbian rights supporters, and political figures. The American Civil Liberties Union has provided Goodman with legal counsel from the beginning.

Supporters of her case include Charles Carter, a national vice-president of the American Federation of Government Employees; Allyn Clay, president of Local 731, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; the Colorado American Agriculture Movement; George Naylor, a leader of the North American Farm Alliance; and National Organization for Women chapters and officers from Milwaukee, New Jersey, San Jose, and New York City, as well as Colorado.

Sally Goodman's case is at a new stage. Supporters in Colorado and across the country have a new opportunity to challenge the government's asserted right to spy on workers and weaken the union movement. The file documents can be taken to unions and labor officials, as well as women's rights organizations, Black and Chicano groups, and others.

Endorsements and contributions should be sent to PRDF, 25 W 3rd Ave., Denver, Colo. 80223.

Wentzville UAW wins contract

BY JOE ALLOR

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — On January 28, the 3,100 members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2250 ended their two-week strike at the modern General Motors Assembly Center in Wentzville, Missouri. In a step forward for auto workers, the union won its first local contract since the plant opened in 1983.

The major demand of the union, which struck the plant on January 15, was that the company scrap its "pay for knowledge" system — an out-and-out attempt to scuttle work rules and seniority rights in order to squeeze more work out of fewer workers.

Under the "pay for knowledge" system, production workers who could perform 16 or more assembly-line jobs became part of a higher-paid labor pool. Supervisors were able to make daily job assignments without any recognition of seniority rights. More than 70 percent of Wentzville workers were part of this pool.

The union won some modifications of the "pay for knowledge" scheme in the new contract.

The number of operations in the labor pool has been reduced from 16 to 8. The

placement of these workers will now be according to seniority.

The old work rules recognized only two job classifications: production and maintenance. The new contract calls for 32 job classifications and assignment of jobs by seniority.

Another gain for Local 2250 is that outside ground maintenance crews and the workers who drive the finished cars to loading areas — previously nonunion jobs — will now be UAW members.

The contract was approved by 83 percent of the 1,702 union workers at the plant. There was some opposition to the agreement by a layer of the 400 skilled tradespeople who work in the plant. The contract doesn't provide for nearly as many job classifications as traditionally won in UAW contracts. These workers are worried about the continuing attack on the skilled trades throughout the auto industry.

Meanwhile, UAW workers at GM's Corvette plant in Bowling Green, Kentucky, ratified a contract agreement settling a 13-day-old strike.

Joe Allor is a member of UAW Local 110 at the Chrysler Plant II in Fenton, Missouri.

What lies behind the U.S.-Canadian split in the UAW

BY NORTON SANDLER

By mid-February, unionists in locals representing the overwhelming majority of the 120,000 members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Canada voted to approve the decision made by the Canadian Council of the UAW last December to establish a separate, independent union in Canada.

The split in the UAW — announced both by UAW Pres. Owen Bieber and Canadian UAW Director Robert White — was not a sudden event. Rather, it registered the effects of four and a half decades of the union officialdom's collaboration with the auto bosses on both sides of the border at the expense of the UAW membership.

The UAW was forged as an international union with U.S. and Canadian components in the late 1930s. It arose out of victorious struggles for an industrial union in the auto industry, beginning with the sit-down strikes against General Motors in Flint, Michigan, in 1937. Inspired by this action, Canadian auto workers in Oshawa struck General Motors that same year and won union recognition.

Again, in 1945, Canadian auto workers on strike at the Ford plant in Windsor received aid from their union brothers across the border as hundreds of U.S. UAW members joined the picket lines in Windsor.

Weakened by bureaucracy's policies

The North American UAW officialdom, however, basing itself on the premise that workers can best advance by putting the profits of the owners of the auto companies first, has blunted the potential power of the union from the beginning.

Like the rest of the trade union bureaucracy, the UAW tops concentrated their efforts on trying to wrest modest wage gains for the better-paid, organized workers. In place of the militant struggle that had led to the formation of the union in the 1930s, workers were discouraged from using their own power in contract disputes. A class-collaborationist course was firmly pursued by the top officialdom.

The union was gradually weakened, but during the decades of relative capitalist expansion, the erosion of union power was not so evident. This is now becoming clearer with the bosses' "takeback" drive that opened in 1974.

At the time of the 1974-75 worldwide recession, the capitalists began a series of assaults on the unions as a way of trying to increase their rate of profit. This has led to the bosses trying to force through takeback contracts as a standard operating procedure, attempts to institutionalize two-tier contracts that deepen divisions in the working class, and, in some cases, open union-busting.

The role of the UAW bureaucracy in the

face of these assaults has been consistent with the rest of its history.

When Chrysler claimed that it was heading toward bankruptcy in 1979 and demanded major concessions from the union as the key to obtaining government loans to pay its creditors, then-UAW president Douglas Fraser readily complied.

In three separate negotiations with Chrysler between 1979 and 1982, the UAW ranks lost nearly \$1 billion in frozen wages, cost-of-living-allowance benefits, and paid holidays.

After watching the results of the Chrysler pact, both General Motors and Ford demanded takebacks in the 1982 negotiations, claiming that they were facing an emergency situation with plummeting sales that threatened the future of the U.S. auto industry. Fraser responded by negotiating major wage, benefit, and work-rule concessions. By a narrow margin, the UAW ranks voted to accept the contract in the United States. In Canada, things turned out differently, as will be explained below.

In contract negotiations with GM and Ford in 1984, the union leadership agreed to another series of takebacks for U.S. auto workers. These contracts were not negotiated under the so-called "emergency conditions" that GM and Ford had claimed in 1982 but this time under conditions of huge, record profits for the auto giants.

Included in the takeback deals agreed to by UAW Pres. Owen Bieber were no hourly contract raises for two years of the contract, to be replaced by lump sum bonuses tied to increases in productivity; a deepening of the two-tier wage provisions begun in 1982; and profit sharing as a substitute for wage increases.

There was considerable anger and opposition to the contract among the UAW ranks. After some locals voted down the contract, Bieber made it clear that he was not going to negotiate another one even if there was a long strike.

Without any leadership coming forward from any quarter to carry the fight forward, many of the ranks saw no alternative to voting for the contract or facing the possibility of a long strike with little chance of winning.

Different response in Canada

But when General Motors moved to have the same contract negotiated in Canada, it met with different results.

The offensive by the Canadian rulers against workers in that country has proceeded at a somewhat different pace. The bosses' drive for takebacks there has run into more substantial opposition than in the U.S. labor movement.

In 1979, when Chrysler was screaming the loudest about bankruptcy, the Canadian auto workers accepted substantial conces-



Canadian auto workers in Windsor, Ontario, during 1982 UAW strike. Canadian Chrysler workers waged successful strike that year that won gains not only for themselves, but also for U.S. workers for first time since 1979.

sions. The pattern changed in 1982. First, U.S. workers voted against Chrysler's attempt to get them to sign a fourth giveback contract. The proposal was rejected by 70 percent.

When Chrysler's owners demanded that Canadian workers accept a contract pact negotiated at the same dollar rate as in the United States (at the time one Canadian dollar equaled US\$.81), the Canadian Chrysler workers went out on a five-week strike.

In the course of that fight, they stood up to considerable ruling class pressure in both countries. The Canadian UAW also came under pressure from the UAW officialdom in Detroit — first, not to strike, and then, to settle rapidly.

In spite of the obstacles placed in their way by the bureaucracy in Detroit, the Canadian strikers received considerable support from U.S. auto workers. The strikers hung tough. They called Chrysler's bluff about not having enough money and won the strike. The victory at Chrysler in Canada resulted in forestalling further takebacks and winning wage gains for Chrysler workers on both sides of the border.

'83 public employee struggles

In 1983, big struggles by Canadian public employee unions and other unions broke out in Quebec and British Columbia.

While these struggles were eventually pushed back by the combined strength of the employers and the Canadian government, they had an impact on Canadian politics. A growing number of concessions has been wrested from unions in Canada over the last few years, but the employers have not yet been able to make the same inroads won by the U.S. bosses.

It is in that context that the 1984 GM negotiations began in Canada.

From the beginning, the ranks made it clear that they would not accept many of the worst provisions of the U.S. contract. There was particular opposition to wage increases being traded off for lump-sum payments and profit sharing.

With the Canadian dollar currently worth 75 percent of the U.S. dollar, the workers demanded wage raises that reflected the specific conditions faced today in Canada. When GM offered basically the same contract negotiated in the United States, the Canadian auto workers went on a 12-day strike. They won modest hourly pay increases and cost-of-living adjustments. No profit sharing or lump-sum payments were included in the Canadian contract.

Bieber opposes strike

Bieber tried to block the Canadian UAW from waging this strike, insisting that the union there had no right to autonomous control over its affairs.

On Dec. 10, 1984, following a meeting of the UAW International Executive Board (IEB) in Detroit, Bieber and Canadian UAW Director Robert White announced to the media in separate statements that the UAW was on the verge of splitting into Canadian and U.S. unions.

The split was brought to a head by Bieber's rejection of the Canadian UAW's

demands for autonomy in contract negotiations, control over strike funds, and staff appointments.

In raising these demands, White, the sole Canadian on the 25-person IEB, cited repeated interference from UAW officials in Detroit in the affairs of the 120,000-member Canadian UAW, and in particular noted the pressure applied by Bieber to force the Canadians to accept the same pact that had been signed by the UAW in the United States.

In rejecting the Canadian UAW demands, Bieber said that "demands for total Canadian control of union staff and operating funds, and for direct, automatic access to the strike fund in Canada are demands that cannot be accommodated in our International Union structure."

While the ranks of the Canadian UAW have mainly been spectators in the process of the unfolding split, there is evidence that there is support for autonomy in Canada.

In the minds of many Canadian auto workers, the UAW bureaucracy in Detroit is associated with the employers' attempts to force concessions on them.

The demands for autonomy are just and should have been granted by Bieber as a way of strengthening the entire UAW against the auto bosses internationally.

While objecting to the interference of Bieber in Canadian union affairs, White made it clear that he did not intend to chart a course away from class collaborationism. He told the Canadian UAW council December 15 that "We will be required to conduct ourselves responsibly in future bargaining."

"Bob White [referring to himself], who is leading this move, is the same person who chaired the Task Force with the industry presidents dealing with the importance of investments, jobs, trading relations, etc. Does that change? Of course it doesn't!"

Basis for reunification

A break from the class collaboration that hems in workers on both sides of the border will be the basis for reunifying the UAW ranks North America-wide.

In the United States, the new class-struggle leadership that must emerge from the ranks to lead that break will begin by rejecting the notion that the bosses and the workers share common interests. It will also reject the idea that there is a separate solution to the economic crisis for auto workers, steelworkers, or any other particular group of unionists. Instead, it will search for solutions to the crisis facing the entire working class. It will be led by and identify with the struggles of the most oppressed workers — Blacks, Latinos, women, and immigrants.

It will take up the challenge of mobilizing labor against the imperialist war unfolding in Central America. It will chart a course toward replacing capitalist rule by workers and working farmers.

It is under the conditions of deepening class conflicts here and in Canada that a leadership will arise capable of forging links of international solidarity with fellow workers in Canada and helping unite North American auto workers against their common enemies.

Lessons for class-struggle unionism

Farrell Dobbs on the Teamsters union

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—YSA CAMPAIGNS FOR SOCIALISM—

BY ARGIRIS HARAS

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Members of the Young Socialist Alliance and Socialist Workers Party have been regular participants in the weekly "Marketplace Forum" in St. Paul.

The forum was created last fall by a group of Black high school activists. Most of the students attend St. Paul Central High School and founded the forum last September to address "issues concerning the community, city, and nation."

The forums are cosponsored by the Inner City Youth League and the *Summit University Free Press*, a monthly Black community newspaper. The forums are held at the offices of the Inner City Youth League in the heart of St. Paul's Black community.

Usually the audiences range between 30 and 60 people and are overwhelmingly Black. Most are high school and college students and young workers.

Over the fall Marketplace Forum featured numerous speakers, including Black profession-

als, politicians, journalists, artists, and clergy. Along with a variety of local issues, topics such as the campaign of Jesse Jackson and the November presidential elections, police brutality in the Black community, the reactionary role of the so-called Moral Majority, the role of the church, the courts, and the death penalty have been discussed and debated at the forum.

Often speakers have put forward a perspective of reforming the capitalist system to win social change. This perspective has, however, met opposition and heated debate. The ideas of Malcolm X and self-defense for the Black community in the face of racist violence have been raised in these discussions by participants, including activists in and around the National Black Independent Political Party.

On January 16, a forum was organized to pay tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. The forum did not feature a guest speaker and was opened to all participants. The discussion focused on King's legacy.

Some of those who spoke attacked attempts by the government, politicians, and others to strip King's contribution of any political content. Others pointed to the real meaning of the civil rights movement as a mass social movement and the gains that were won by it.

King's opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam also became a topic of discussion. Excerpts read from King's 1965 speech, *Beyond Vietnam*, were met with enthusiasm.

This year organizers of the forum have broadened the topics to include South Africa, the Soviet Union, Central America, and the Caribbean.

On January 23 Ellie García, a Chicana steelworker in Minneapolis and a Young Socialist Alliance National Committee member, was invited to present an eyewitness report of her recent trip to Nicaragua. She explained the impact of the U.S. war against Nicaragua. August Nimtz, a member of the National Black Independent

Political Party and Socialist Workers Party, gave a brief slideshow on his two-month stay in Estelí, Nicaragua.

The audience was interested in learning the facts about the Nicaraguan revolution. Some wanted to know how they could help get out the truth about Nicaragua, since, as one person said, "you don't hear things like that on TV."

García emphasized the call for an April 20 national antiwar march on Washington, D.C., to oppose U.S. intervention in Central America and U.S. support for the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. She urged the audience to get involved in the local coalition building the march.

A young Black coworker closed the discussion on Nicaragua and antiwar action saying, "This teaches us that revolution is nothing to be afraid of."

Every week the Militant Forum, which is also held weekly, is announced at the Marketplace Forum. Several Marketplace Forum participants often also attend the Militant Forums.

The *Young Socialist*, newspaper of the Young Socialist Alliance, has established a regular readership with many of the Black high school students who attend the Marketplace Forum and the YSA has become known as a militant socialist organization for young people and is identified with the ideas of Malcolm X. The *Militant* newspaper also gets around with two to three issues sold each week.

As a result of the discussions the YSA has initiated, several activists are getting involved in the April 20 antiwar mobilization.

YSA members look forward to continuing their participation in Marketplace Forums, an important community event. The forums are held weekly, on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Inner City Youth League offices, at the corner of Selby and Victoria, in St. Paul.

Argiris Haras is a member of the YSA National Committee.

YSA redoubles efforts to build April 20 rally

The following message was sent from the National Executive Committee of the Young Socialist Alliance to the Sandinista Youth Association of Nicaragua on February 21, the 51st anniversary of the assassination of Nicaragua's national hero, Augusto César Sandino. It was signed by Peter Thierjung.

On the occasion of the 51st anniversary of the assassination of Augusto César Sandino, the Young Socialist Alliance pledges to redouble our efforts to counter the U.S. war against Nicaragua.

Recently the U.S. government has again stepped up its campaign of slander against the people of Nicaragua, distorting the truth about your struggle in defense of the revolution and for self-determination.

President Reagan refers to the U.S.-organized mercenaries — the *contras* — as "brothers." Secretary of State Shultz says that the people of Nicaragua have fallen "behind the Iron Curtain."

We know that this campaign of lies is aimed most of all at the youth and working people of the United States who are in their majority opposed to U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. It is a campaign designed to convince U.S. youth and working people that the people and government of Nicaragua are our enemies. That a war to overthrow the revolutionary government of Nicaragua is justified. That

the *contras* should be financed and backed to the hilt by the U.S. government.

We say no to the U.S. government, its lies, and its war against Nicaragua. The revolutionary people of Nicaragua, not the *contras*, are our brothers and sisters. Our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua are not the enemy. The U.S. government which supports apartheid in South Africa, threatens Cuba, occupies Grenada, and wages attacks against the rights and living

standards of U.S. working people is our enemy. Truly, the U.S. government, the imperialists, are the enemy of humanity, as the Sandinista anthem says.

The YSA has set as its main task today to educate, organize, and mobilize for the national demonstration that has been called by over 100 organizations for April 20 in Washington, D.C., to demand "No U.S. intervention in Central America!"

In the spirit of Sandino, and in the spirit

of the heroic Nicaraguan youth who have fallen in combat, the YSA renews our commitment to get out the truth about your revolution, to counter the lies of the U.S. government, and to mobilize the broadest forces possible in opposition to the U.S. war against Nicaragua.

No U.S. intervention in Central America and the Caribbean!

Stop the U.S. war against Nicaragua!
No pasarán!

N.J. Teamsters strike Hartz Mountain Corp.

BY MARY ROCHE

BLOOMFIELD, N.J. — Two hundred members of International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 917 met February 18 to organize round-the-clock picketing at the Hartz Mountain Corporation's Bloomfield, New Jersey, plant. Hartz workers produce animal feeds, rug shampoos, and dog flea collars.

"We're going to go round the clock until we win this strike," John Burke, Jr., business manager of the Manhattan-based Local 917, told the outdoor meeting. "We're going to show this employer that we're strong."

The assembled workers quickly signed up for six four-hour picket shifts, women during the day and men at night.

More than 300 Teamster production,

maintenance, and warehouse employees — primarily Blacks and Latinos — went on strike February 15 when the company and union failed to reach agreement on a new three-year contract.

The membership rejected the company's final offer by a vote of 197 to 22. The main issues include wages and benefits.

Burke told the *Militant* that "The average pay at the plant now is something over \$6 an hour and we're seeking \$1 an hour more in each year in a three-year agreement." The final offer by the company was 25 cents an hour more in each contract year.

"We're just fed up."

"We want respect that we deserve, money that we deserve, benefits that we deserve."

These were some of the comments on the picket line. Strikers explained that some workers in the plant, because of a two-tier wage system instituted after the last contract, make only around \$4.10 an hour.

Several said they felt it was important to raise lower-paid workers to a higher rate and close the wage gap caused by the two-tier system.

The pickets explained that they went on strike because they felt they took a step backward with their last contract, accepting less than what they deserved. "Why should we go backwards again?" one picket asked.

Some workers in the plant have additional jobs just to make ends meet, they said.

Another worker, who had been at the plant 11 years, explained that the company told him that if he didn't want his job, they would replace him with someone off the street. "Because of the unemployment rate," he said, "the company tries to take advantage of those working."

People driving by the picket line showed a great deal of support. They honked their horns and raised clenched fists in solidarity.

"The people are prepared to show the company we mean business," Burke said. "We will have pickets round the clock until we get what we feel is a fair offer from the company. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters is giving us support and they have already responded. The longer the company keeps us out, the tougher our position is going to be."

Mary Roche is a member of Teamsters Local 877.

Castro speech on defense policy in 'IP'

For more than 25 years the Cuban revolution has organized to defend itself from military aggression by U.S. imperialism.

In a December speech to the 6th Congress of the Federation of Students in Intermediate Education, Cuban president Fidel Castro reaffirmed the necessity to be militarily prepared. "Peace is not attained through weakness," he stated. "Peace is attained through the strength, courage, and determination of peoples."

Castro also reiterated that Cuba "will always be on the alert for any sign or indication as to U.S. leaders veering toward a policy of respect or a policy of aggression toward our country."

The speech, delivered shortly after the announcement of U.S.-Soviet arms talks, takes up the imperialist arms build-up and the question of "detente."

A major portion of this speech will appear in the March 18 issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

The current, March 4, issue of *IP* features articles on the current situation in Lebanon, including the factors behind the partial Israeli withdrawal.

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Marroquín wins support in S.F. for antideportation fight

BY MARILEE TAYLOR

SAN FRANCISCO — Héctor Marroquín, a 31-year-old undocumented worker fighting deportation to Mexico, recently spoke at a number of meetings in Northern California aimed at publicizing his case and gathering more support for his right to live and work in the United States.

An important development in the tour here, part of a three-week tour of the state, was the involvement of activists from the movement to provide sanctuary for Central American refugees.

Marroquín, along with several sanctuary activists, spoke at a meeting here February 15.

"The attack on the sanctuary movement, like the attack on my right to stay in the United States, is a serious attack on elementary democratic rights," Marroquín said.

In his case, he explained, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is trying to deport him "because they don't like my ideas." Marroquín is an opponent of the U.S. war in Central America, a defender of the rights of all immigrant workers, and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance. Although he is clearly eligible for a residency visa ("green card") — both his wife and son are U.S. citizens — the INS refuses to grant him residency.

"The goal of these immigration prosecutions," Marroquín said, "is to harass and punish any political activist who stands for and defends the rights of refugees and immigrant workers in the United States."

"They are also aimed at facilitating the escalation of the U.S. government's war against Nicaragua and El Salvador. This is clear from the fact that in the courtroom the government is trying to stop the sanctuary activists from making any reference in their defense to U.S. aggression in Central America."

Marroquín urged everyone to get involved in building the antiwar demonstration in San Francisco that will take place on April 20.

Valerie Cabot of Catholic Social Services denounced the fact that, although there are an estimated 100,000 Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees in the Bay Area alone, only a tiny percentage have been granted political asylum.

Tom Sears of the Noe Valley Ministry zeroed in on the heart of the problem: "If the U.S. government got out of El Salvador, if the *contras* got out of Nicaragua, and if the repressive regime got out of Guatemala, there would be no more refugees."

Other participants in the meeting included a Salvadoran refugee captured by the INS and held for three months in a detention center; and Margaret

Smetana, a representative of the Social Justice Committee at St. Mary's Hospital, who invited Marroquín to address the group's next meeting.

Marroquín began his tour of Northern California with a house meeting in Seaside, where he spoke with a number of Black activists and farm workers.

In San Jose, Marroquín shared a platform with Carmen Broz, an activist in the sanctuary movement, and Guillermo Campos, a farm worker active in the struggle against deportation. He was also able to meet with a dozen members of International Association of Machinists Local 562, which organizes workers at the FMC war materiel plant.

At the close of the tour here in San Francisco, six workers from El Salvador and

Mexico were among those who attended a class given by Marroquín. He discussed the history of U.S. government immigration policy, which attempts to make immigrants a special target in times of war and social crisis.

Throughout his tour Marroquín stressed the need for all who support his fight against deportation to send letters and telegrams to the Immigration Service, demanding it stop stalling and grant him a green card.

The protests should be addressed to INS Commissioner Alan Nelson, Washington, D.C. 20536. Copies, along with donations, can be sent to the Political Rights Defense Fund, P.O. Box 649, New York, N.Y. 10003.



Héctor Marroquín

Militant

D.C. anti-apartheid actions continue

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Opponents of South African racism and U.S. government support for apartheid continue to mobilize here in picket lines, demonstrations, and forums. For more than 13 weeks — every Monday through Friday — pickets have targeted the South African embassy for demonstrations during afternoon rush hours.

The picket lines have ranged in size up to 1,000. Organized by TransAfrica and the Southern Africa Support Project (SASP), the protests demand the release of South African political prisoners, including African National Congress leaders Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, and labor

leaders jailed following the successful general strike in November 1984.

The South African regime's recent crackdown in that country has broadened the scope of the anti-apartheid activities here. On February 6, a "Ring the Capitol" was organized just before President Reagan's "State of the Union" address. About 500 people showed up to protest the Reagan administration's ties with apartheid and to support the freedom struggle in South Africa. The action was initiated by D.C. congressional delegate Walter Fauntroy with help from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Washington Metropolitan Central Labor Council, TransAfrica, and SASP. Most demonstrators were

Black and members of trade unions.

Most of the unionists present were members of the American Federation of Government Employees or the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Also present were food workers, printers, bakers, machinists, transit workers, and others. There was organized participation from American University students who have an active anti-apartheid group on campus.

Another addition to the daily embassy protests was a February 12 sit-in at Deak-Perera, the main outlet in Washington for South African Krugerrand gold coins. Sales of Krugerrands in the United States last year were over \$484 million, the single largest South African export to the United States. The protest forced Deak-Perera to close its doors for the rest of the day.

SASP, at its February meeting, announced that it was planning to organize a demonstration at the Singer Corporation plant in Silver Spring, Md. Singer is reported to be shipping a \$30 million fossil fuel power plant simulator to South Africa.

Detroit UAW strike ends

BY JOANNE MURPHY

DETROIT — When their contract expired at midnight January 31, 1,200 members of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 78 walked off their jobs at Kelsey-Hayes plants in Detroit and Romulus, Michigan. After five days of round-the-clock picketing in record-setting cold, the local approved a new contract on February 10 by a vote of 442 to 171.

Pickers said they were out to get back the concessions they gave up in 1982. The new contract doesn't accomplish that, but workers felt they won a contract they could live with.

Kelsey-Hayes, a subsidiary of Fruehauf Corp., makes wheels, hubs, and brake parts for the auto makers.

UAW Local 78 president James Bruce reported that the company claimed poverty but pounded away with threats to move to other facilities in the United States,

Canada, or Brazil.

This threat carried added weight with the announcement the day before the vote of the closing of the 135-year-old Stroh Brewery in Detroit, which will throw 1,000 workers out on the street this spring.

Local 78 did win back a cost-of-living allowance (COLA), although it is not as good as they used to have. It will be paid in a lump sum in November and will not be folded into the hourly rate.

Pensions were increased by an average of \$30 a month, bringing the typical retiree's check to \$965. This is an important issue in the local, which has 1,640 retirees and an average age of over 50.

Bruce said some younger workers are back in the plant after deep layoffs between 1978 and 1984. This includes some women, and the contract won them showers and improved locker facilities. There were very few women in the plant since World War II, and those hired in 1973 had all been laid off and their shower room taken over for other purposes.

The new contract will add 30 cents to hourly wages this year, 20 cents next year, and 15 cents in 1987, plus an annual lump-sum bonus of 2.25 percent of straight-time wages. Wages under the old contract ranged from \$9.10 to \$13.38 an hour.

Joanne Murphy is a member of UAW Local 235.



Militant/Steven Fuchs

Unionists protest at South African embassy in Washington, D.C.

Ohio farmers protest toxic dump

BY RANDY WARREN

VICKERY, Ohio — The close to 100 people gathered at the Grange Hall here January 31 expressed outrage when they heard a state-approved "clean-up" proposal from Chemical Waste Management, Inc.

Dangerous levels of Dioxin and PCBs have been found in three lagoons at a Clyde, Ohio, facility owned by the company. Workers and farmers in this community have been trying for several years to get local, state, and federal agencies to do something about the health hazards at the liquid disposal facility.

Many residents complain of shortness of breath, skin rashes, peeling skin, and headaches. Several have to haul drinking water since their wells became contaminated. Last Labor Day, a large yellow cloud mushroomed from the lagoons and drifted over the community. A community-initiated health study is being made.

After hearing the company's proposals, people were furious. The plan, called "Phase I," is to dry out the toxic sludge with cement and limestone dust, remove it from the lagoons, and pile it up in a 36-foot mound, which would be covered with a tarp after the operation was finished.

A young sugar-beet farmer argued that the winds would blow the toxic material all over the county. The company spokesman said, "I would let my granddaughter play in that stuff." The farmer responded, "Maybe you would, but the rest of us wouldn't."

People were also angered that a private corporation, not the government, would be monitoring the air at the site. One resident, after finding out that the project manager had no previous experience, said, "We aren't guinea pigs. We just live here."

After the meeting, he told this reporter: "Nothing ever happens at these meetings; the company does what it pleases."

Many of the residents belong to Northern Ohioans to Protect the Environment (NOPE), a coalition that was started several years ago when a chemist who worked for Chemical Waste went public with the violations the company was making. He was subsequently fired and afterwards his home was burned mysteriously.

Sandra Measimer, a member of NOPE, said they write letters to congressmen all the time and it seems they are getting nowhere. She thought they should organize public protests.

Community residents and farmers bought 10 copies of the *Militant*.

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Nicaraguan Indian organization dis

MISATAN holds second assembly to assess its progress, autonomy proposals

BY ELLEN KRATKA
AND JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

PUERTO CABEZAS, Nicaragua — Some 350 Miskitos representing 54 Indian communities gathered in this Atlantic Coast port town January 26 and 27 for the second assembly of the Organized Miskitos of Nicaragua (MISATAN).

According to Fornes Rabonias, coordinator of the group, MISATAN is organized in 84 Miskito communities in the northern part of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast region. But more than one-third of the communities were unable to send representatives due to the war situation in the area.

In addition, there are Miskito communities in the southern half of the Atlantic Coast and in the north-central departments of Matagalpa and Jinotega. There were a handful of observers from these zones, although the six-month-old MISATAN does not function as an organization there yet.

Balance sheet

The main purpose of the assembly was to hear a balance-sheet report by coordinator Rabonias on MISATAN's first six months of work. Other MISATAN leaders also presented reports on the land rights of the Miskito communities and on the government's proposal to grant autonomy to the Atlantic Coast.

Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión brought greetings to the conference from the National Directorate of the Sandinista Front and the revolutionary government. Carrión heads the government commission charged with drawing up the projected autonomy statute.

In his opening report, coordinator Fornes Rabonias explained that "MISATAN was organized to make plans, as an indigenous organization of the Nicaraguan Miskitos, to demand our full rights, based on our history and cultural experiences and

within the principles of the Sandinista People's Revolution."

The July 19, 1979, overthrow of the Somoza capitalist dictatorship, Rabonias said, "has meant for the Nicaraguan people the concrete possibility of obtaining their complete and total liberation." This is particularly significant for the Miskito people, he added, who "have had to confront for centuries the integration of different colonial, neo-colonial and imperialist powers."

"With the triumph of the Sandinista People's Revolution," he added, "many concrete measures were initiated that allow the indigenous peoples to begin their own history."

"MISATAN sprung up and has developed in an atmosphere of aggression that the entire territory of Nicaragua is undergoing," Rabonias said.

"MISATAN was conceived and grew up in spite of the desires that other indigenous sectors, like MISURA and MISURASATA, as well as the North American imperialists, have to destroy us." MISURA and MISURASATA are two Miskito-based factions that are part of the CIA war against Nicaragua.

Goals of MISATAN

Rabonias then outlined the main goals of the organization: "The desire of the Nicaraguan Miskitos is that peace may be established, that our Miskito families be reunited, that each community be allowed to develop itself, and that through the medium of dialogue our historic demands be granted."

One historic demand of the Miskito people — bilingual-bicultural education — is already starting to become a reality, thanks to MISATAN. With the participation of MISATAN leaders, a pilot project in bilingual education was begun last year. In 1985 it will be expanded to about half



Militant photos by José G. Pérez

Fornes Rabonias (left), coordinator of recently organized MISATAN, and Mary Bushey, organization's financial secretary, addressed delegates at MISATAN assembly in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua.

the Miskito communities in the northern part of the Atlantic Coast (see accompanying article). This effort stands on the modest gains made through the first literacy campaign begun after the Sandinistas took power.

The main demand of MISATAN, however, is the same as that of the rest of the Nicaraguan population: "We demand that the North American imperialists — lovers of killing, destroying, and war — leave us in peace."

Much of Rabonias' speech was devoted to detailing concrete gains registered by various Miskito communities thanks to MISATAN. This includes cancellation of debts of Miskito peasants; issuance of land titles to Miskito communities; the repatriation of 57 Miskitos from Honduras with the help of the United Nations High Commis-

sioner for Refugees; and the freeing of 58 Miskito peasants imprisoned on various charges.

In his report on land tenure, Rufino Lucas, secretary of juridical affairs, explained that previous governments had engaged in wholesale land fraud against the Miskito people. "Dozens of treaties, dozens of agreements were made behind the backs of the Miskito people." Lumber and mineral rights were assigned to foreign — mainly U.S. — corporations, and Miskitos were often denied use of their traditional hunting grounds and timberland.

In the late 1970s, with the creation of the Institute for National Development (INFONAC), the situation became critical. "There came a time when INFONAC became the owner of so many riches of our Indians, of our communities, that community members couldn't cut down a single tree, because INFONAC would confiscate it and fine them."

Lucas explained that INFONAC was able to do this because legal title to lands used by Miskito communities was often unclear. Among Miskitos, most land has never become the private property of an individual. Instead, a given community simply uses as much land as it sees fit, with much of the land laying fallow most of the time due to the primitive slash-and-burn agricultural methods employed.

Moreover, many land titles that were issued to various Miskito communities as part of treaties — first with British, then Nicaraguan authorities — were lost or destroyed.

Thanks to the revolution and MISATAN's work, Lucas reported, "Today our communities have every right to say to an institution, 'we authorize you to cut so many trees, and if you violate this agreement, we will immediately expel you from these community lands.'"

He said that now the government, working together with MISATAN and the Miskito communities, is issuing new and clearly defined titles, based on the claims of the Indian people themselves. "We thank the revolutionary government for giving us the opportunity that it be the Indian people, that it be the rank and file, who decide the solution to this problem."

And then he went on to explain what that solution would be. "For MISATAN, a community may have no land title, but if it has been living on that land for even one year, then those lands belong to that community."

Autonomy

MISATAN financial secretary Mary Bushey gave the report on autonomy. She explained that the revolutionary government had set up a national autonomy commission, as well as two regional commissions, one in the northern part of the Atlantic Coast, where Miskitos are concentrated, and another in the southern part, where most Spanish- and English-speaking Blacks live.

Revolution advances bilingual education

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

PUERTO CABEZAS — "Bilingual education was one of the main objectives that MISATAN adopted at its founding six months ago," said Dionisio Melgara, MISATAN secretary of education and culture.

Interviewed by the *Militant* during a break at MISATAN's second assembly, Melgara said that bilingual education is now making rapid advances among Miskitos on the Atlantic Coast, thanks to MISATAN's efforts.

He explained that the revolutionary government had approved a decree requiring bilingual education through fourth grade as far back as 1980.

"But due to the problem of the war, the resettlement of communities from the Río Coco, and other problems, this decree could not be carried out and it was almost four years, until last year, that a work team was established here in Puerto Cabezas."

Melgara said that bilingual education "is the greatest response, the greatest defense, the greatest respect of the Miskito language."

"In the past, no government ever considered carrying out bilingual education. Miskito was forbidden in the schools."

Speaking of his own student days twenty years ago under the Somoza dictatorship, Melgara said, "I remember the insults from other groups, even other Coast groups, Creoles [Blacks] for example, where the greatest insult in junior high school was to tell a Miskito, you are a *mosco* [fly], you are stupid."

"And the language, to speak Miskito, you had to do it secretly so people didn't humiliate you. 'Speak Christian,' they would say. 'Speak white.'"

"Teachers spoke to the children in Spanish," Melgara continued, "and the children sometimes answered like automata, like puppets, 'yes, yes' and 'no, no' — very beautifully but not understanding."

Some Miskito teachers secretly gave their classes in Miskito, especially in isolated Indian communities along the Río Coco. "But when the authorities found about that, they would reprimand the teacher, and sometimes even fire him for speaking Miskito."

Although most teachers were Miskitos, "all the technicians, even pedagogues, were from the Pacific Coast. And they would say it was forbidden to speak Miskito to those children because we were going to hispanicize them. Miskito is no good, it must be pushed aside."

With the victory of the revolution, this changed. People were no longer punished for using Miskito in class, and many teachers began to use Miskito in their lessons. But all the textbooks, readers, and other instructional material were still in Spanish.

This problem is now beginning to be overcome. A pilot program in kindergarten and first grade was carried out in three communities during 1984. In 1985 it will be extended to second grade and to some 40 communities, with further expansion in future years.

The plan is for all classes to be taught in Miskito, using Miskito-language primers and workbooks. For the first time, Miskito children will learn to read and write in their own language. Spanish will also be taught, but as a second language. A team of 18 educators and translators — all from the Atlantic Coast, and headed by MISATAN leader Mary Bushey — is working full-time in Puerto Cabezas preparing the texts.

Melgara, who is a member of that team, explained that much more is involved than simply translating a few books. It has been necessary to come up with stricter spelling and grammatical norms for Miskito, and to keep in constant touch with the community — especially the elders — to check and recheck the grammar and vocabulary.

Some basic things present big problems. Miskito has two sets of names for numbers, the original, indigenous one and another taken over from English. It would be preferable to use the original Miskito names, but these are extremely long and are based on multiples of five, rather than ten, complicating instruction in arithmetic. So, for example, the number nine in Miskito is an eight syllable word that literally translated means "one five plus two twos". The tentative decision is to use both sets of names for numbers, as is the current Miskito practice.

The biggest task, however, is transculturation of textbooks. "Adaptation — adaptation according to our Miskito reality — is basic," Melgara says. As an example, he cited the first-grade primer in use throughout the country, which includes a story about a *marimba*, a Nicaraguan musical instrument virtually unknown among Miskitos.

Another problem the program faces is materials. "Sometimes we don't even have paper, which is the most basic thing." The program is receiving material aid from a range of countries, including Italy, Sweden, and the German Democratic Republic.

Most teachers, he said, "don't have much experience, they haven't gone to teaching school. But 95 percent are either Miskitos or bilingual, and many also speak English. And even though technically we're not at the level of other countries in terms of trained teachers, teachers with college degrees, we believe that even with empirical methods, and with all the problems, we can get good results."

The biggest challenge, Melgara said, "and this is why this is such a big question, is to rescue, through bilingual education, all the cultural values of our people, the oldest, most authentic, most traditional things."

Opposes revolution on Atlantic Coast

land rights of Miskito communities

She outlined the government's basic framework for the autonomy statute: that it be multi-ethnic, taking into account the rights not only of the Miskitos and Creoles, the main Black group, but also of smaller Indian and Black groups; that it be a truly popular measure, which the inhabitants of the Coast from all ethnic groups support; and that it guarantee the unity and territorial integrity of Nicaragua.

Beyond that, she explained, it was up to the delegates to this assembly, as well as participants in other forums where the autonomy question is being discussed, to propose what its content should be.

In his greetings to the conference, Commander of the Revolution Luis Carrión focused on the efforts of the government to bring peace to the Atlantic Coast region through two parallel efforts: negotiations with MISURASATA, a wing of the counterrevolution whose best-known leader is Brooklyn Rivera; and the granting of autonomy to the Coast.

Negotiations with Rivera

On the discussions with MISURASATA, Carrión reported that its representatives had failed to attend a January 19-20 negotiating session in Bogotá, Colombia. Later, answering questions from reporters, Carrión said that MISURASATA had also refused, before and after the scheduled session, to set a new date for continuing these talks, demanding that the Sandinista government cease all military operations on the Coast as a condition for renewing negotiations.

Carrión added that, although there was never any formal agreement, both the Sandinistas and MISURASATA had tended to avoid clashes with each other once the process that led to the negotiations began last fall. This pattern was broken by MISURASATA, which, acting jointly with MISURA, attacked the Puerto Cabezas area in mid-December and has since carried out a stepped-up military campaign.

On the autonomy issue, Carrión said that those responsible for the divisions between the various ethnic groups in Nicaragua were the previous rulers — the U.S. imperialists, the Somoza group, and the big capitalists.

"These people introduced division among the people, promoted distrust, separated one from the other, and promoted racism, discrimination, and fear.

"But today after the revolution," he continued, "the people have assumed control of their destiny and future, all the Nicaraguan people, and within the Nicaraguan people, also the Miskitos, the Sumos, the Creoles, and all the peoples of the Atlantic Coast.

"Within the people of Nicaragua," Carrión said, "we have a diversity of ethnic groups, of cultures, and languages. We have to recognize that diversity, we have to respect that diversity, and while respecting that diversity, we have to forge the true unity of the entire people."

Carrión said that one aim of the autonomy should be to guarantee "historic rights which the governments that existed before the revolution denied" the people of the Coast.

"The people have the right to speak and express themselves freely in their native tongue. They have a right to receive education in their own language. They have a right to have communal property in land legally recognized. They have a right to benefit from the exploitation of the natural resources of the Atlantic Coast. They have a right to participate in making the decisions that affect them. They have a right to directly take on local matters. . . . Autonomy should guarantee all those rights."

In his news conference with reporters, Carrión elaborated on some points related to the autonomy issue.

He said that the government "is not willing to negotiate the statute of autonomy with anyone, much less a not totally representative group," referring to Brooklyn Rivera's MISURASATA. This group

claims to be the sole legitimate representative of all Miskito, Sumo, and Rama Indians.

Nevertheless, Carrión continued, Rivera and other MISURASATA members can participate in the process of discussions about the drafting of the statute, provided they lay down their weapons and return to Nicaragua.

Against separatism

He said that, although Rivera claims he is for autonomy, "he has some positions which are in fact separatist."

He said that, in speaking of autonomy, "we refer to a whole territory, with Indian and non-Indian population."

In response to a question, Carrión explained why the Sandinista Front opposes the separation of the Atlantic Coast from the rest of Nicaragua.

"First of all, because the most important event that has taken place in the politics of the Americas in recent years is the Sandinista revolution. The main historic responsibility that we Nicaraguan revolutionaries have is the preservation of this revolution."

He said that "stimulating separatist positions" was part of the U.S. strategy for destroying the revolution, with the aim of dividing Nicaragua's territorial base.

"Separatism doesn't have real historical support, nor roots in the history and social situation of the zone. It is an artificial idea with strictly counterrevolutionary purposes" in the context of a workers and farmers government holding power in Nicaragua.

Following the main presentations, local delegations caucused to discuss the reports. A wind-up plenary to hear the conclusions of these caucus meetings was replaced, at the insistence of the delegates, by a question-and-answer "Face the People" session with government officials.

Discussion on return to Río Coco

The issues raised at this session centered around several concerns. First, the question of peace, with its related issues of Miskitos being allowed to return to their ancestral homeland on the Río Coco bordering Honduras and the reunification of Miskito families and communities divided by the war. Miskitos in northern Nicaragua were moved to new village settlements by the revolutionary government several years ago to protect them from counterrevolutionary attacks.

On these issues, government leaders reiterated their pledge that all "Miskitos who have taken up arms" can return and reintegrate themselves into their families and communities under terms of an am-



Militant/José G. Pérez

Delegates to MISATAN assembly discussed problem of relocation caused by U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary war; questions of land ownership; teaching of Miskito children in their own language for first time; and idea of autonomous rule for Atlantic Coast population.

nesty recently enacted by the National Assembly.

On the return of Miskitos displaced by the war to their original communities, Myrna Cunningham, head of the government in the region, said that some communities located several miles from the Honduras border are now reestablishing themselves. But those on the border river itself cannot be reestablished until and unless there is an end to the war, given their totally vulnerable position only a stone's throw away from Honduras, where the CIA bands act with total impunity.

Other deeply felt grievances centered on rude treatment and abuses by some members of the Sandinista People's Army and the Sandinista Police. These included prolonged jailing of Miskitos for minor offenses; harassment of Miskitos who are not carrying a government-issued ID card required in the zone; closing down the port so that Miskitos who come to Puerto Cabezas from other coast towns to shop can't leave; use of churches in Miskito settlements by Sandinista troops; and disrespect and contempt by government functionaries toward community leaders — including ministers — and MISATAN representatives.

Commander Antenor Rosario, head of the Sandinista Army in the region, responded to these complaints. Speaking to one of the Miskitos who had brought these problems forward, he said, "I want to con-

gratulate the compañero because he is able to, he has the strength to, denounce these things. He has the valor to beat back the fear that many of us sometimes have.

"That is why we would like to know, with their names and surnames, who are those who abuse the people — be they Miskito, ladino [i.e., "Spanish"], Sumo, or Rama. . . . Because we don't believe it is necessary only to be careful with churches on the Atlantic Coast; on the contrary, it is necessary to be careful with all the things that belong to the Miskitos, to the Ramas, to the mestizos, or Spanish, as you say.

"And those who abuse the people, using force or the weapon that they carry, are not revolutionaries, are not Sandinistas. . . . For us, whoever abuses his uniform, or his weapon, against the Miskitos or any other ethnic group of Nicaragua . . . is a counterrevolutionary."

Calling an officer out of the crowd, Commander Rosario explained that that officer was in charge of the port and gave his explicit instructions: "Any Miskito, Sumo, Rama, or mestizo, at the hour they want, when they want, can leave from that dock without anyone stopping them!"

The head of the Ministry of the Interior in the region also spoke in response to the complaints. He ordered the immediate freeing of some Miskitos imprisoned for minor offenses and special investigations of other alleged abuses.

'We ask that you return us to our river'

BY JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

PUERTO CABEZAS — Peace, so that their families can be reunited and that their people can return to their ancestral homelands on the banks of the Río Coco. That was the central and most heartfelt aspiration delegates at the second MISATAN conference wanted to communicate to government leaders who attended a "Face the People" question-and-answer session that closed the assembly.

"We know our problems. We ask that we be returned to the Río Coco, because where we are the lands produce only rice and yucca, while those of our river produce everything. We ask that you return us to our river. We have been away for more than three years."

So said an old man from the settlement of Somovila, voicing the conclusion of his delegation. In keeping with Miskito tradition, each seven-person community delegation included an elder, who acted as spokesperson for the group.

His simple statement provoked pro-

longed and thunderous applause, by far the loudest and longest of the conference. And that is for good reason.

More than three years ago, all the Miskito hamlets up and down the Río Coco were rapidly evacuated by Nicaraguan troops to protect the Indian population from the first major offensive by CIA-sponsored counterrevolutionaries.

The resettlement problem is not exclusively, and perhaps not even mostly, a Miskito one. Many tens of thousands of Spanish-speaking peasants from the north-central part of Nicaragua have also become war refugees, but with the Miskitos the problem has an added dimension.

Removal from the Río Coco meant not only losing lands and crops and homes, it also meant disruption of a way of life that is very different from that of other people in Nicaragua.

"When we lived on our river, we worked for ourselves, we didn't work for someone else," explained Nicanor Ruizo López,

Continued on Page 11



Militant/José G. Pérez

Miskito delegates like this woman explained their concerns to Nicaraguan government leaders at "Face the Nation" question-and-answer session.

Why family farmers are being driven from the land

Big business responsible for crisis

Continued from front page

ditors in it only scratched the surface," she stated. "Creditors are much more aggressive in trying to help the farmers out of farming."

Government officials and the big-business press contend that farmers who are too small and inefficient should leave farming. The *New York Times*, in a February 7 editorial, put it this way:

"The 300,000 large, mechanized farms that yield about 70 percent of America's farm output are models of efficiency. But the two million farms producing the other 30 percent are too small to stay afloat without help. Even with Government subsidies, these farms taken together yield no net income. Some have become vacation homes for the rich; most are the homesteads of poor people who must earn their living elsewhere."

What is the truth?

Tens of thousands of working farmers, who depend on the labor of their families, produce socially useful food and fibers which are distributed on the market to other members of society. However, in return for contributing to the social wealth of the country, they do not end up with the equivalent value of the labor time (often 15 to 16 hours a day) they have put into producing these commodities.

In fact, in a mounting number of cases they do not receive enough to meet their costs of production or even enough to live on. That's why so many farmers are going deeper into debt and ending up bankrupt, and why so many seek off-the-farm jobs.

But this is not because they are "inefficient" or "too small." Rather it is because they are not paid for a big portion of the value they create; it is stolen from them by the owners of the banks, land, and trusts.

Monopoly domination

The ruling capitalist families that dominate the gigantic food merchandising trusts have increasingly brought working farmers under their boot in the marketplace. By using their monopoly leverage in processing, transportation, and retailing they are able to squeeze superprofits out of farmers. This monopoly control of the market by commercial capital is why farmers get low prices for their commodities and why consumers pay high prices in the supermarket.

Likewise, the same big families dominate the industrial capitalists who charge monopoly prices for machinery, fuel, fertilizers, and other inputs needed for production. The exploitation by both commercial and industrial capital is the counterpart to the gigantic ripoff by the banks who profit handsomely from the interest payments on bank mortgages and loans paid by farmers.

Whether or not farm families hold onto their land, livestock, and machinery has nothing to do with how much they produce, how well they manage their farms, or how well they maintain their land. In fact, working farmers frequently end up in worse condition when they and other farmers bring in a large crop, since their prices and income plummet. Many farmers have pointed out that they are victimized for being too good at what they do.

There is not something inherent in agriculture or in production by independent producers that has driven more and more farmers off the land in the past decades.

Rather it's the increasing monopoly stranglehold over agriculture by the country's ruling families and their unquenchable thirst for profits that are responsible.

When the ruling rich have squeezed a farm family so dry that there's not much left to make a profit from, they toss it aside like a used lemon.

After one family is driven out the banks may set up another on the farm either as the owner or as a tenant. Or neighboring farmers may purchase or rent some of the land in order to expand their holdings in the struggle to survive. Whatever the case, the new producers farming the land are run through the same profit mill until they, too, can no longer produce sufficient profits for the parasitic overlords.

Being forced off their farms is economically, socially, and emotionally a wrenching experience for farm families. This human misery, however, is of no concern to the cold-hearted profiteers who sit in the plush boardrooms of the banks and trusts or to their political servants, whether of the Democratic or Republican breed.

Most wage workers, when presented with the facts, can see that, like themselves, working farmers are being robbed blind. The form is different but they are the victims of the same ruling families that own the mines, mills, factories, and transportation lines where they are employed. They can see that relief is clearly needed.

Who should bear the cost?

But why should workers have to help subsidize debt-ridden farmers? That is the theme that the big-business press and politicians keep hammering away at.

"Let me make one thing very plain," President Reagan stated in his weekly radio broadcast on February 23. "Yes we are sympathetic and we will extend support. But American taxpayers must not be asked to bail out every farmer hopelessly in debt, some by hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Talking about "taxpayers" in general is an attempt to cover up the class reality behind taxes — who pays them and who benefits from them. Most workers know that they pay the lion's share of taxes. But it should not be forgotten that working farmers also pay taxes. Together the producing classes pay the most taxes. And this comes from part of the social wealth they have created.

So the first question is what do working people get back in return for their taxes. By far the biggest item in the federal budget is military expenses. And this is precisely the area where President Reagan proposes a hefty increase.

But the mammoth war budget is of no benefit to working people. It's aimed at building a giant nuclear arsenal and conducting wars of aggression against working

Nicaragua takes new peace initiative

FEBRUARY 28 — Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega announced new proposals on February 27 to "encourage the reduction of tensions" and "open the road to peace" in Central America.

The previous week, President Reagan had openly admitted that the goal of the U.S. war against Nicaragua was to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. In announcing the plan, Ortega said that it could contribute to the United States and Nicaragua, together, finding "a peaceful solution ... and move away from a military solution."

Since Washington began its war in Central America, the Nicaraguan government has made several proposals for negotiations and has supported initiatives by others. Nicaragua, for example, was the first country to agree to sign the pact proposed by the Latin American countries organized in the Contadora Group.

The U.S. government, however, has rejected every proposal to de-escalate the war, instead continuing to increase its military intervention.



Militant/John Staggs

Demonstration against farm foreclosure. Big-business media campaign is aimed at trying to head off working-class support for family farmers.

people in other countries. Its purpose is to defend the interests of the same handful of ruling families that profit from the unpaid labor of workers and farmers in this country. The funds now spent on the military could be made available to help provide cheap credit and price supports for farmers as well as badly needed social programs for all working people.

Moreover, working people should not be taxed! Since a big chunk of the social wealth created by farmers and workers is stolen from them by the capitalist exploiters, these profiteers should be taxed to help pay for programs that benefit both workers and farmers.

By ending the profit and tax robbery of working farmers, they could meet their production costs and make a decent living from farming. They would be able, if they wanted, to devote full time to farming instead of being forced to rely on off-the-farm income.

No place for working farmers?

To say that there is no place for independent producers who want to work the land and produce socially necessary products — that it is inevitable that they leave their farms — is to say that exploitation of farmers is inevitable, that it will continue indefinitely.

But this is not so. This can be demonstrated by looking at Cuba, our neighbor just 90 miles away.

When a few U.S. and Cuban families dominated agriculture in Cuba and reaped lucrative profits from the labor of the country's producers, Cuban farmers were continually deprived of land, machinery, and credit and were pushed into miserable conditions.

Today, more than two decades after the grip of the capitalist rulers was removed and the workers and farmers took matters into their own hands, Cuban farmers face a totally different situation. Alongside big state farms, there is a sizeable section of Cuban farming that is done by family farmers who hire no wage labor. Nobody in Cuba can make a profit by renting, collecting interest payments, or speculating on the land of Cuban farmers. Nor can they make profits by dominating the market. Farmers cannot be forced off their farms against their will.

To the contrary, Cuba's agrarian reform, adopted at the beginning of the revolution, gave many Cuban farmers who were short of land more land. The Cuban government provides cheap credit and cheap fertilizer on the basis of need, not on the basis of being a "good credit risk."

By controlling the market, the government guarantees Cuban farmers a price for their produce adequate to meet production costs and living income. To accomplish this and still keep prices to consumers low, the government bears the cost of supporting prices.

The government explicitly rejects eliminating independent farmers by turning their farms over to supposedly more efficient state farms that are larger and more mechanized. In Cuba, independent producers have a place, as long as they want to continue farming.

That is the perspective we should have in this country.

But like Cuba, it will require a social revolution of the producers that will throw out the government of the ruling families and replace it with a government run by working people.

In its latest proposal, the Nicaraguan government offered an indefinite moratorium on arms acquisitions including "interception airplanes needed to complete the country's antiaircraft system."

Ortega announced that his government would send home 100 Cuban military advisers, half of whom would leave in May.

Both of these proposals are seen as the "first step" toward a "complete withdrawal of foreign military advisers" from the region, said Ortega.

Ortega also invited a bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation to inspect Nicaragua's military facilities. Ortega predicted that such a visit would disprove the "false argument of supposed militarization of Nicaragua."

In return, Ortega said, the Nicaraguan government hopes that the U.S. government will return to the talks between the two governments which had been taking place in Manzanillo, Mexico. Washington walked out of the talks last month.

Ortega also said that he hoped that in

light of the new proposal the Reagan administration would "withdraw its request to Congress" for funds for the CIA-backed terrorists that have been carrying out the U.S. war in Nicaragua.

As the *Militant* goes to press, the official response from Washington to the new proposal has been limited to "no comment."

On the same day Ortega announced his proposal, Gen. Paul Gorman, retiring commander of U.S. military forces in Central America, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in support of funds for the counterrevolutionary mercenaries in Nicaragua. Gorman explained that without U.S. government aid, these mercenaries are only "marginally able to sustain" themselves and are incapable of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government in the "foreseeable future." But their terrorist activities have "drawn off the energies of the Sandinistas and have diverted a heck of a lot of money," he said. Gorman explained that the U.S. government should continue its war against Nicaragua to "bring the Sandinistas to a reckoning."

Marxism

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clude \$.75 postage and handling.

Farm leaders organize 'summit meeting'

BY JOHN GAIGE

AMES, Iowa — More than 60 farm movement leaders and activists came together here February 16-17 to discuss how to confront the severe and accelerating farm crisis in the rural United States. This "summit meeting" was hosted by the North American Farm Alliance (NAFA).

Organizations represented included: Kansas American Agriculture Movement (AAM), Missouri AAM, Iowa Farm Unity Coalition, Wisconsin Farm Alliance, Illinois AAM, Indiana Citizens Organization Acting Together (COACT), and Groundswell (Minnesota). Groundswell recently spearheaded a 10,000-strong protest at the Minnesota state capitol January 21. There were also farm leaders from groups in Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Michigan, Virginia, and Texas.

Merle Hansen, a Nebraska farmer and president of NAFA, opened the meeting by briefly tracing how farm groups have arisen since the early 1900s to confront different aspects of an ongoing agricultural crisis.

Farm leaders discussed building support for protests against the farm crisis, which is fueled by the bipartisan policies of the Democratic and Republican parties. On March 4, there will be farm protests in Missouri and Washington, D.C. These protests were seen as part of a process of building for a nationwide "people's moratorium" on farm, home, and small-business foreclosures. To most farm leaders present here, the "people's moratorium" meant stepped-up efforts by grassroots farm organizations to marshal forces big enough to mount direct action to stop more forced farm sales.

Squeezed on one side by low prices, farmers have also been saddled with debt, choked by high interest rates, and have seen their collateral for loans (land and machinery) sharply devalued.

On top of this crisis, President Reagan's proposed budget would wipe out federal price support programs and other measures that have provided some meager support to family farmers.

Farm leaders at this meeting felt that until they receive federal loan rates for some farm commodities pegged at 90 percent of parity, they need a moratorium on their debt. Parity is a measure of farm prices compared to cost of production, using the "favorable" base period of 1910-1914.

Darrel Ringer of Kansas AAM said, "We need 90 percent parity, meanwhile a moratorium, and if we don't get it, we go to the streets and let her rip."

Representatives of the Texas State Department of Agriculture presented an oral report on their draft proposal for a 1985 farm bill entitled "A Populist Proposal to Save America's Family Farms: The Farm Policy Reform Act of 1985." Farm leaders took this discussion seriously. Nearly all believe that the only way out of the unfold-

ing farm crisis is to have a fundamental programmatic change in farm policy at the federal level.

The heart of this bill's seven-step proposal is a federal loan rate program set at cost of production, which is approximately 70 percent of parity according to the author's calculations. Most farm leaders here were reluctant to agree on a legislative proposal that proposed a parity level that was so low. Carlos Welty, a Missouri farmer and national spokesperson for AAM, said, "Well, getting 70 percent of parity would be good compared to what we get. But, speaking for Missouri farmers, what if I am in debt and have worn-out equipment? I won't be able to make it." Farm leaders at the meeting decided to support the bill in principle, but reserve the right to critically comment on its parity level and other provisions.

Darrel Ringer pointed to the absence of any mention of a moratorium on farm foreclosures in the draft proposal. "You take away our only organizing tool if you don't talk about total moratorium," said Ringer.

Minn. farmers protest foreclosures

BY JAY RESSLER

ORTONVILLE, Minn. — On February 1, 10 days after 10,000 farmers, unionists, and others demonstrated at the Minnesota State Capitol, nearly 500 farmers braved 20-below temperatures to carry out a series of direct-action protests against foreclosures in the west-central part of the state.

Four sheriff's sales had been scheduled for the day. Protests were organized at two of these.

Under pressure from a telegram campaign and the impending protest, Travelers Insurance Co. cancelled the sale of Jim and Gloria Langman's farm on January 31, agreeing to a 45-day extension.

A rally was held to protest the threat to the Langman farm anyway. Protesters packed into the community hall and adjoining hallways of the Pope County Courthouse in Glenwood.

Among the speakers were farm protest leaders Bobbi Polzine, Carmen Fernholz, Norman Larson, Burt Henningson, Stan DeBoer, and Sjeord de Hoop, a farmer touring from Holland.

Ron Mathis, a Black auto worker from St. Paul, spoke representing United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 879. Mathis received the most enthusiastic applause of the day when he brought greetings from the auto workers and reported that Local 879 had sent a protest telegram to Travellers threatening a boycott.

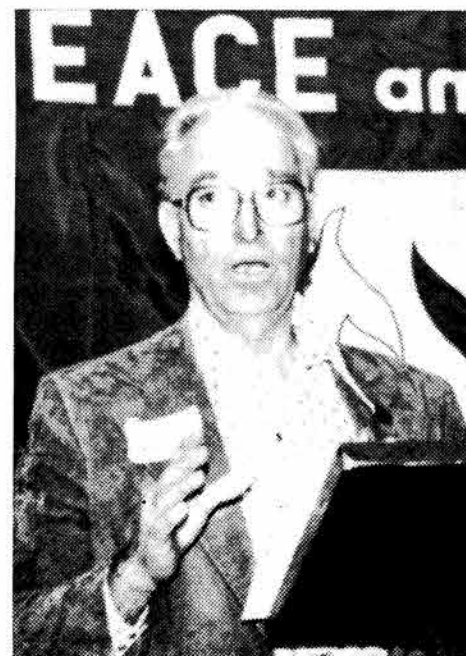
A half-dozen socialist workers, including members of the United Steelworkers union and the International Union of Electronic Workers, also participated. Many conversations took place in which farmers

"We need people fighting foreclosures in the streets."

Some farm leaders thought the bill could be used to open discussions on the farm crisis, help educate, and organize farm protests. Other leaders thought farmers should not get caught up too much in trying to write farm legislation, but instead concentrate on putting forward farm demands. Merle Hansen said, "We have to keep our eyes on building political power."

Farm leaders discussed using the *North American Farmer* newspaper, published by NAFA, as an organizing tool to present the ideas and actions of the farm protest movement. There was some discussion on experiences selling it.

Many people picked up bundles of 200 copies of *North American Farmer* when they left the meeting. To obtain copies of the paper, write to NAFA, P.O. Box 2502, Ames, Iowa 50010. Subscription rates are \$18 for 20 issues in the United States, \$15 for 10 issues in Canada, and \$30 for 10 issues overseas.



North American Farmer
Merle Hansen, leader of North American Farm Alliance.

expressed interest in efforts by workers to resist takeback demands by their bosses. They were glad to hear that many workers are concerned with the deepening farm crisis.

Twenty copies of the *Militant* featuring a front-page story on the Minnesota farmers rally at the capitol were sold.

Several farmer activists distributed scores of copies of the *North American Farmer*, the publication of the North American Farm Alliance. Significantly, no right-wing literature was distributed and there were no right-wing speakers at the protests, although there was discussion and debate of right-wing ideas that have been promoted among farmers.

Langman, a past-president of Minnesota American Agriculture Movement, told the crowd he was convinced that solidarity from the UAW, as well as various farm groups, was what had made the difference in forcing Travellers to cancel the sale of his farm.

"We've won a very short concession," he said, "but the 10-12,000 farmers who are going to lose their farms this year won't have won anything until we've won a one-year moratorium on foreclosures."

'We ask to return to our river'

Continued from Page 9

who was from the community of San Andrés de Bocay on the Río Coco.

"The people want to work. From when they were little until now they are not accustomed to eating by buying. But here we earn money, and food is very expensive. One fish costs 300 or 200 córdobas, but in our river we fish and hunt. We eat as much as we want, and we don't spend even a five," Reynaldo Salvatierra Martínez, from Walakitán, told the *Militant*.

An old woman who spoke to the "Face the People" session told the same story. "My biggest problem is that I don't have relatives. I don't have sons. I'm a widow, and to buy an orange you need ten córdobas. I have no money to buy all the things to eat — a pound of meat costs money."

"That is why I prefer the river. Because there you get help. Because in the community, the men go out to hunt, return with meat and say, 'grandmother, there is your piece.' But they don't do that here."

To a significant degree, the Indian communities on the Río Coco lived outside a money economy. Land, as much as you could possibly want and then some, was freely available. There was fish and game. Much of the labor was collective, organized through a custom known as "hand in return." Basically it amounts to this: today I help you build your house, tomorrow you help me build mine. Agricultural labor was also organized this way.

Capitalist economic relations were slowly but surely penetrating these communities. For decades the Indian peasants

Following the Glenwood rally farmers demonstrated outside the Glenwood Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) office.

Afterwards 200 farmers drove 40 miles to occupy the federal Land Bank office in Appleton and then another 18 miles to Ortonville to try to stop the Big Stone County sheriff from auctioning off the Ed Kowalzyk farm.

After refusing repeated demands to halt the auction, the sheriff began the sale on the front steps of the courthouse, surrounded by three deputies. Within minutes every available uniformed officer in the area arrived, including a school security guard and a game warden.

During the auction farmers chanted: "No Sale! No Sale!" for 30 minutes.

Drowned out, the sheriff auctioned off the Kowalzyk farm anyway, claiming he had a written bid. At a certain point he reached into his pocket and read from a scrap of yellow note paper. Shortly after, a protest leader signaled for the chanting to stop and announced the farm had been sold.

Farmers left vowing to continue the fight on all levels to reverse the current crisis.

had been selling small grain surpluses to buy manufactured goods, and the occasional use of money within the community had become common. But it was still far from being universal and all-pervasive.

This way of life brings with it other things: tight-knit communities and kinship groups, age-old traditions that are hard to break.

Many of the problems afflicting the Miskitos are the same as those facing the rest of the Nicaraguan population, especially in the war zones: inflation, shortages, price-gouging, the constant tension of being on the lookout for attacks by the CIA bands, the pain of hearing about friends and relatives who have fallen in battle or been savagely murdered by the *contra*.

Nevertheless, despite all the problems, the revolution is making big efforts to aid resettled Miskitos.

"We don't say things are very bad here," says Reynaldo Salvatierra Martínez, referring to the state farm in Matagalpa department where his community has been resettled. "The government helps us. We have medicine, every state farm has a medical post. So we are pretty regular."

"But what we see as the main thing is peace, land. We have been two years, three years without having anything. And there, although we may live more poorly, it is going to be more tranquil than here, because there we eat what we want, what we grow ourselves, while here only by buying."

"People are sad, they want to do their traditional work, they don't have land. People say, as soon as there's peace, the next morning we go. But if there's no peace, we can't return."

Ohio family farmers hold meeting

BY ROBBIE SCHERR

BASCOM, Ohio — Over 60 people, mostly farmers from northwest Ohio, attended a meeting here February 5 to discuss the problems facing working farmers.

The meeting was sponsored by the Family Farm Movement, an organization based in the Columbus area. Several farmers spoke about the personal experiences that led them to join the Family Farm Movement.

Dave Jordan, from Circleville, Ohio, was foreclosed in 1980, along with several other farmers, when a bad hail storm ruined his crop. He described the brutality with which the bank seized all of his business and personal accounts, including \$3,000 his children had saved through the 4-H club.

He managed to secure financing to restart a farm only after going to Washington, D.C., with other farmers. Jordan said that he'd learned "not to lay down and play dead for a creditor."

A Pickaway County farmer, Howard Mosbecker, quoted a recent Ohio Department of Agriculture announcement that predicted one out of four Ohio farmers would go out of business this year.

This prediction seemed accurate to those attending the meetings. According to a survey taken at the meeting, more than a third of the farmers felt that a forced sale may be in their future within a year or two. Four out of 10 said they were being pressed to make loan payments they couldn't afford, and a similar percentage felt their families were experiencing "above average" or "extreme" stress due to the financial situation of their farms.

Dick Daley, who organized a demonstration of 800 people to try to block the sale of his brother's land, explained that even though they were not successful, an important sense of unity grew out of the struggle. He especially applauded the role of the women in organizing the farm protest movement.

Three rank-and-file United Auto Workers (UAW) members from Toledo attended the meeting and were very well received by the farmers. Some of the farmers present were or are members of the UAW as well.

The idea of a one year moratorium on foreclosures was a popular one at this meeting. Several participants pointed positively to the recent Minnesota State House rally as the way to fight for such immediate relief.

ARIZONA

Phoenix

Legacy of the Russian Revolution: The Soviet Union Today. Speakers: Gustavo Gutierrez, Phoenix labor activist, visited USSR; Chris Driscoll, representative Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 2, 7 p.m. 3750 W McDowell #3. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 272-4026.

The World Economic Crisis: Its Impact on U.S. Labor and Working Farmers. Speaker: Elizabeth Stone, National Committee member, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 9, 7 p.m. 3750 W McDowell #3. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 272-4026.

CALIFORNIA

Oakland

Maurice. Cuban documentary film on the Grenada revolution and the life of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Sat., March 16, 7:30 p.m. 3808 E 14th St. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

San Francisco

Eyewitness Report on the Disaster at the Wilberg Mine in Utah. Speaker: Cecelia Moriarity, member United Mine Workers Local 2176 at the Wilberg mine. Translation to Spanish. Fri., March 1, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

Maurice. A Cuban documentary film on the Grenada revolution and the life of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Fri., March 15, 7 and 9 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

San Jose

Eyewitness Report on the Disaster at the Wilberg Mine, Utah. Speaker: Cecelia Moriarity, member United Mine Workers Local 2176 at the Wilberg mine. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 2, 7:30 p.m. 46 1/2 Race St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (408) 998-4007.

Maurice. A Cuban documentary film on the Grenada revolution and the life of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Sun., March 17, 6 p.m. 46 1/2 Race St. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (408) 998-4007.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Freedom Struggle Benefit. Featuring jazz singers, entertainers, and poets. The Ojeda Penn Experience, Alice Lovelace, Woodie Neal Parsons, and Lee Heuermann. Sat., April 13. Atlanta Junior College Auditorium, 1360 Stewart Ave. Tickets: \$4 in advance, \$5 at the door. Children free. Ausp: National Black Inde-

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No More Vietnams in Central America and Caribbean! Down With Apartheid in South Africa! Join NBIPP on April 20 in going to Washington, D.C., for the march against war and oppression. For more information call (404) 622-4120 or 624-4331.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Current Stage in the Mideast — Will Israeli Withdrawal from Lebanon Bring Peace? A panel discussion. Sun., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Ave., 4th floor. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Maurice. Detroit premiere of Cuban documentary film on the Grenada revolution and life of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Sun., March 10, 7 p.m. 7146 W McNichols. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 862-7755.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Defend Central American Refugees: Asylum for Rene Hurtado! Speakers: representative of First Unitarian, Walker Community Church, St. Luke's Presbyterian Sanctuary Project; Tom Jaax, representative Socialist Workers Party and member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Sun., March 3, 4 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Minnesota Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 646-6325.

Nicaraguan Farmers Speak on Agricultural Reform and U.S.-backed War. Speakers: Juan and Piedad Tijerino, representatives of Nicaraguan Association of Farmers and Ranchers. Sun., March 10, 7 p.m. UAW Local 879 hall, 2191 Ford Parkway. Ausp: North American Farm Alliance. For more information call (612) 439-9717.

Maurice. A Cuban documentary film on the Grenada revolution and the life of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Discussion to follow film. Sun., March 17, 4 p.m. 508 N Snelling. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Minnesota Militant Forum. For more information call (612) 646-6325.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Halt the U.S. War Drive. Defend Sanctuary Activists! Speakers: Jim Mohn, Riverside Church Task Force; Hector Marroquin, Socialist Workers Party member fighting deportation by U.S. government. Translation to Spanish. Fri., March 1, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Benefit to Provide Medical Supplies for the Nicaraguan People. An evening of speakers, films, music, and food. Speakers: representative of Nicaraguan Mission to the UN; John Gerassi, professor of political science at Queens College. Fri., March 1, 6 p.m. Main auditorium of the Graduate Center, CUNY, 33 W 42 St. Donation: \$4. Ausp: CUNY Committee Against U.S. Intervention in Latin America. For more information call (212) 473-1493.

The Farm Crisis: What Future for U.S. Working Farmers? Speakers: Leland Fanning, dairy farmer; Lynn Lewis, solidarity activist recently returned from farm tour of Nicaragua; Andrea Gonzalez, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City. Translation to Spanish. Fri., March 8, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Benefit for the New Bertha Calderon Women's Hospital in Managua. Cultural evening and dance. Program will feature new slideshows, including two on women in Nicaragua. Sat., March 16, 7 p.m. Taller Latinoamericano, 19 W 21 St., 2nd floor, just off 5th Ave. Admission: \$5. Ausp: Nicaragua Support Project and Committee in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador. For more information call (212) 475-7159 or 242-1040.

OHIO

Cincinnati

The U.S. Political Situation Today. Speaker: John Studer, member of National Committee, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., March 2, 7:30 p.m. 4945 Paddock Rd. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (513) 242-7161.

Cleveland

Maurice. Cuban film on Maurice Bishop and the Grenada revolution, 1979-83. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 15105 St. Clair Ave. Donation: \$3. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (216) 451-6150.

OREGON

Portland

Malcolm X: El-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz. Speaker: Leroy Watson, member Socialist Workers Party and International Association of Machinists District Lodge 751. Sat., March 2, 7:30 p.m. 2732 NE Union. Donation: \$2.50. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

Celebrate International Women's Day

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Abortion Rights Under Attack: How to Defend a Woman's Right to Choose. Speaker: Pam Burchett, representative Socialist Workers Party, member International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 381-9460.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

The Fight for Women's Rights — from Central America to the Coal Mines in Britain. A panel discussion. Showing of videotape *Not Just Tea and Sandwiches*, about the role of women in the British coal miners strike. Sun., March 10, 7:30 p.m. 510 Commonwealth Avenue, 4th floor, Kenmore T. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 262-4621.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

Celebration of International Women's Day. Film: *With Babies and Banners*. Discussion to follow. Sun., March 3, 7 p.m. 7146 W McNichols. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (314) 862-7755.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

International Women's Day Program: The Fight for Affirmative Action. Videotape: *Women of Steel*, remarks by Pat Grogan, former member of United Steelworkers union, staff writer for the *Militant*. Translation to Spanish. Fri., March 8, pre-forum dinner, 6:30 p.m.; forum, 7:30 p.m. 141

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Farm Crisis: An Internationalist View. Speaker: Chris Drake, member of Socialist Workers Party recently returned from Nicaraguan coffee brigade. Sat., March 2, 7:30 p.m. 141 S Highland Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

TEXAS

Houston

What U.S. Workers Can Learn from British Miners Strike and Irish Freedom Struggle. Speaker: Dick McBride, Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 2, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

Nicaragua — the Revolution Advances. An eyewitness report and slideshow by a panel of Houston-area trade unionists. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

North American Harvest Volunteers in Nicaragua. An eyewitness report. Sat., March 9, 7 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

Halsey (Cor. Raymond, one block from Broad St.) Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Albany

Celebrate International Women's Day. A panel discussion. Translation to Spanish. Fri., March 8, 8 p.m. 352 Central Ave. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (518) 434-3247.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

International Women's Day — Working Women Speak Out. Speakers to be announced. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 301 S Elm St. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5596.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Celebrate International Women's Day: Cuban Women Lead the Way. Showing of Cuban film, *Lucia*. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 141 S Highland Ave., 3rd floor. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Women and the Fight Against U.S. Intervention in Central America. Slideshow presentation with Joan MacLean, recently returned from El Salvador; Jill Fein, member Socialist Workers Party and International Association of Machinists Local 751. Sat., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 5517 Rainier Ave. S. Donation: \$2. Ausp: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (206) 723-5530.

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TEXAS: Austin: YSA, c/o Mike Rose, 7409 Berkman Dr. Zip: 78752. Tel: (512) 452-3923.

Dallas: SWP, YSA, 132 N. Beckley Road, Zip: 75208. Tel: (214) 943-5195. **Houston:** SWP, YSA, 4806 Alameda. Zip: 77004. Tel: (713) 522-8054.

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WISCONSIN: Milwaukee: SWP, YSA, 4707 W. Lisbon Ave. Zip: 53208. Tel: (414) 445-2076.

They bought that too? — Corrections Corporation of America, the nation's largest owner of privately operated slammer, advises



Harry Ring

prospective clients that one advantage of putting their jails in private hands is "reduced pressure from courts for reform and upgrading." Not that they lack procedures. One of their jail administrators assures,

"I review every disciplinary action. I'm the Supreme Court."

How liberal can you get? — Executives of the Smithsonian Institution proudly reminisce that even though some counseled that it was a "rash" decision, they decided not to shut their doors during the 1963 civil rights March on Washington.

Standard Operating Procedure — The U.S. Navy said it will probably decline to pay General Dynamics some \$10 million in improperly billed travel expenses. However, the navy secretary assured, "There is no cause for believing that there is anything wrong with the way General Dy-

namics is doing business with the navy."

Oh — Part of the General Dynamics tab which won't be paid, as we reported earlier, is the nearly half million for flying the company chairman to his Georgia farm. A company spokesperson insisted the frequent trips were a legitimate expense because using the company jet allowed him a flexible schedule and protected him against terrorists.

Don't confuse 'em with facts — If there's to be community right-to-know programs about chemicals, they have to focus on "effective communications," advises Union Carbide vice-pres-

Robert Pyle. "Merely making information available to everyone who requests it may result in poor communications, raising needless apprehension, misinterpretation, and unfounded public fear."

Bet they sue — ASHLAND, ORE. (AP) — More than 100 people, most of them doctors attending malpractice seminars, suffered food poisoning after eating at a motel here.

On the cultural front — Nancy Reagan enjoyed it. Ron is "immersed" in it and his national security adviser is reading it too. *The Hunt for Red October*, a novel about a half-Lithuanian sub driver who defects with the Soviet

Union's most advanced nuclear sub. The first piece of fiction published by the Naval Institute Press, it's #1 best seller at the Pentagon bookstores.

Getting close to home — Buckingham Palace is weighing withdrawing the royal seal of approval from various brands of coffin nails. The decision came after Princess Margaret, a heavy smoker, had noncancerous tissue removed from her lungs.

We can't seem to catch up — What with continuing inflation, no one with less than \$150 million in the sock can hope to make it onto the *Forbes* list of the nation's 400 wealthiest.

Black Nicaraguan leader speaks at Harlem meeting

Continued from front page

the aim but the will, is that the people of the region — the Indian population and the Black population — enjoy the benefit of the rational exploitation of their resources. And not only enjoy the benefit but also be the ones who administer the exploitation of their resources."

The establishment of autonomous governments, Hooker continued, "is, we're convinced, the most revolutionary project for the peoples of the Atlantic Coast. In fact, we're convinced that the principle of autonomy is the best means by which to carry out the revolution among the peoples of the Atlantic Coast."

It took several years of experience for the revolutionary government to reach this conclusion. "Autonomy was a taboo subject in our country until four or five months ago," Hooker said. "If you spoke about autonomy, you could have been accused of being a separatist." But today it is widely recognized that "autonomy has been a fundamental aspiration of the oppressed peoples of the Atlantic Coast."

Amnesty

Coupled with the steps toward autonomous government is a blanket decree of amnesty, offering safe return and full freedom to any counterrevolutionary who voluntarily lays down their arms. Referring to two leaders who head different factions of the armed Miskito component of the counter-revolution, Hooker explained:

"We're saying to Brooklyn Rivera, come into the country, bring in all your people, bring in all your followers. Come participate in this process of autonomy. And if you have the support of the people, you're going to be the leader of that autonomous government."

"Steadman Fagoth claims he has the support of the Miskito people. . . . We say the same thing to Fagoth. Come into the country and prove it. . . ."

"There is another organization, MIS-ATAN, that is saying the same thing [see

articles on pages 8-9]]. So we say to all of them, prove that you have the support of your people."

If Rivera and Fagoth don't participate, "autonomous governments are still going to be established," Hooker said. "They're going to be established because we've come to the conclusion that the principle of autonomy is the way, the genuinely revolutionary way, to deal with the problems of our different ethnic groups."

It is not easy to take such steps in the midst of the U.S.-financed war, Hooker said. "We're having problems picking our cotton, picking our coffee. We don't have enough workers in our country to do all the things we must do. We have had to ask, for example, our postal workers, 50 percent of our postal workers, to go out into the fields to pick cotton and coffee."

And just recently, he said, a contingent of postal workers was ambushed on their way to the harvest. All 28 were killed "by the people who are being called 'brothers' by this administration."

U.S. war

Nicaragua's economy has been hit hard by the war. "We're in a situation where in the last three years the contras have destroyed more than \$700 million worth of property. Now \$700 million might not seem to be such a big figure, but our total annual exports amount to no more than \$400 million a year. So \$700 million represents practically two years — one year and nine months — of the value of what we ex-



Militant/Michael Baumann

Ray Hooker at outdoor rally after New York City mayor refused to allow use of auditorium.

port.

"Our people are enduring levels of suffering which very few peoples have been asked to endure. We suffer because this administration is waging a war against us, because this administration is financing terrorism. But our people have tasted free-

dom; and even though we must suffer, we shall be slaves no more."

Hooker's tour will continue until late March. Speaking engagements are scheduled in New England, the South, Midwest, and the West Coast, including at more than 20 universities.

Miners drive against union-busting

Continued from front page

affiliate" and has refused to sign as a common employer. This means that miners laid off from one Massey operation have no recall or "panel" rights at other Massey mines, and that Massey assumes no responsibility for back wages and benefits if an "affiliate" goes bankrupt.

UMW president Richard Trumka has labeled the "independent affiliate" setup part of a "corporate shell game" aimed at dividing the union and "insulating the corporation . . . from responsibility."

Massey also claims its subsidiaries are "contractors" with 30-day agreements with the parent company — a blatant union-busting arrangement designed to allow Massey to make agreements with "new" contractors with no obligations to the union work force of the previous "contractor."

Support for the union runs deep in southern West Virginia where union membership spans three generations and countless families. Many miners believe that if Massey is successful, other coal giants will try to challenge the union. Mobilizations have included active union members, UMW pensioners, wives, widows, and neighbors.

Among those arrested for taking part in civil disobedience actions were UMW District 17 vice-president Howard Green and three widows. They "asked if they could go to jail for the union," said national UMW spokesman Joe Corcoran. Union supporters have not been intimidated by the arrests; Massey helicopters circling over-

head; swarms of state troopers; photographing by the cops; and videotaping by the company through a trap door in the roof of the bath house.

The February 21 demonstration of well over 1,000 gave evidence of the UMW members' confidence and determination. They sang union songs at the assembly point and stepped off on their march to the Sprouse Creek plant singing "We Shall Overcome." The striking locals and UMW women supporters led the way.

The unionists filled the huge yard across from the plant. They were mostly from UMW District 30 in Kentucky and District 17 in West Virginia, and they broke into applause as hundreds of District 29 (West Virginia) miners marched in from a separate assembly point.

There have also been demonstrations by UMW members and their wives at the Mingo County Court House where songs and hymns were sung outside as those arrested were taken before the magistrate. The week was capped off with a religious service on February 24 outside the Sprouse Creek plant. It was conducted by a striking miner and attended by hundreds of union supporters.

In a February 19 telegram to the president of A.T. Massey, President Trumka stated the union's willingness to negotiate.

UMW spokesman Corcoran pointed out that the union offered to remove demonstrators if the company would stop running coal. "Our proposals were made basically to create an atmosphere in which negotia-

tions could be fruitful," said Corcoran. "But while our people were in their offices, they ran coal trucks. I guess that was [their] answer."

The UMW is up against enormous corporate power in this struggle. Trumka explained that Massey is partly owned by the huge Royal Dutch Shell Corporation. Massey is also partly owned by the Fluor Corp., which has extensive operations in South Africa and Chile. According to its 1982 annual report, Fluor seeks out "countries with favorable economic and political environments."

Many miners know that Fluor is also one of the parent companies of Peabody Coal, the nation's number one coal producer in 1984. And union miners are well aware — from reading the January *UMW Journal* interview with Cyril Ramaphosa, the Black South African mine workers union leader — of the kind of "economic and political environment" Fluor helps to maintain for Black workers in racist South Africa.

Subscribe!

This article is part of the Militant's ongoing coverage of the big questions facing coal miners and members of other industrial unions under the current offensive by the bosses. Don't miss our coverage of the labor movement. For \$3 you can get a 12-issue introductory subscription. Fill in and mail the coupon on page 2.

150 greet Hooker at rally in Washington

BY MAX SPEAR

WASHINGTON — Some 150 people welcomed Nicaraguan leader Ray Hooker here February 19, on the first stop of his U.S. tour.

In his talk and the lively discussion period that followed, Hooker combined a short history of the Atlantic Coast — "a colony within a colony, because, in all things important, Nicaragua was a colony of the United States" — with a strong defense of the Nicaraguan revolution and its policies against the lying propaganda of Reagan and the U.S. government.

The meeting was organized on four days' notice by the D.C. Committee for Health Rights in Central America, a group that has sent large amounts of medical aid to Nicaragua; and EPICA, the Ecumenical Program for Interamerican Communication and Action. It was held at a local church in the heart of Washington's large Central American community. This church has sheltered Central American refugees fleeing repression of the U.S.-backed regimes.

'Star Wars' and the arms talks

When Washington first announced the "Strategic Defense Initiative" nuclear-weapons program, it immediately and for good reason came to be known by another name — "Star Wars."

Ronald Reagan began nearly two years ago, in March 1983, a campaign to present Star Wars as the ultimate "humanitarian" armaments program. It was, he claimed, a sane and rational approach to the threat of nuclear war, an effort to develop the definitive "defensive" weapon that would make all nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete." In a burst of generosity, later retracted, he even offered to provide the Soviet Union information on the weapons system as it was developed.

But the U.S. government's claims about Star Wars are a lie from beginning to end.

Star Wars is neither new, "defensive," nor any more "humanitarian" than any other weapon in the hands of a government whose main aim is to protect the profits of the banks and business interests it represents.

The essence of the Star Wars program is to expand the striking capacity of U.S. weapons to the depths of outer space. The program began in 1971 under Nixon, and was continued by the Ford and Carter administrations. According to Pentagon documents, the aim is to develop a laser (light ray) or particle beam (a stream of subatomic particles) weapon capable of destroying an incoming nuclear warhead before it hits its target.

The system is supposed to be able to "detect, identify, discriminate, intercept" and destroy nuclear missiles at four different stages in their trajectory. That is, as they are launched, as they rise into the atmosphere, as they travel through space, and as they finally descend toward their target.

If ever actually implemented on a scale sufficient to "protect" the population of the United States, a conservative estimate is that it would cost \$1 trillion. For purposes of comparison, this is roughly equivalent to all the goods and services one-third of the U.S. work force produces in a year.

This staggering figure undoubtedly includes the usual complement of \$500 toilet seats and \$1,000 flashlights. But it probably far underestimates the real cost of filling the technical requirements such a weapons system would have to meet. A recent article in the British business magazine, the *Economist*, tells what a laser-based system — which it describes as "probably closer to operational reality" — would have to accomplish:

"First the missile launch must be detected, then the missile located precisely within a few seconds of blast-off, which means it must all be done by satellite. Then accurate position information must be sent to the laser platform and its control station. Then the laser must be aimed with exquisite accuracy — something like hitting a candle-flame with a rifle at ten miles. Then the laser must be fired and kept on the same spot of the missile for several seconds while it is tearing into space."

Far from providing "safety" to the U.S. population in a nuclear war, such a system would be so expensive that if ever developed at all it would only be used to protect U.S. missile sites. That alone would cost an astronomical sum.

Moreover, there is no such thing as a purely "defensive" weapon. Anything that further "protects" U.S. missiles just makes them more deadly and increases the likelihood of their being used.

Star Wars is in the news because it's the weapon the U.S. government talks the most about. But in reality it is a small part of the overall U.S. arms buildup. Washington is not just funding research in futuristic laser rays and particle beams. It is also pouring millions of dollars worth of modern jet fighters, helicopters, heavy armaments, spy planes, and thousands of U.S. personnel into Central America to try to crush the Nicaraguan revolution and the liberation struggle in El Salvador. New U.S. air bases have been built in Honduras, U.S. warships cruise the coasts of Nicaragua, and a U.S.-financed army is daily waging war against the revolution there.

In the 1986 war budget currently before Congress — and assured of being passed with only minor cuts — the \$3.7 billion allocated for Star Wars research is less than 10 percent of the amount set aside for "new weapons," and only a bit more than 1 percent of the total package of \$314 billion.

Much bigger parts of the new one-year weapons package are 48 more MX missiles, 48 more nuclear-armed B-1 bombers, a new Trident missile submarine, a new Trident 2 missile, 840 new M-1 tanks, 144 new attack helicopters, and 25,000 more troops for the air force and navy.

To counter big and growing international opposition to this outrageous arms buildup, Washington periodically takes part in "arms talks" with the Soviet Union. A new round of such talks began in Geneva, Switzerland, January 7-8, and will resume there March 12.

Previous arms agreements in 1963, 1972, and 1979 neither slowed down Washington's stockpiling of nuclear and "conventional" arms nor brought peace. There is no reason to believe that the present talks are any more likely to.

In fact, as far as the Pentagon is concerned, the talks themselves are another excellent reason for expanding the U.S. nuclear arsenal. It was the U.S. arms buildup that brought the Soviet Union to the talks in the first place, says U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and it "will be impossible" to get an agreement "if we falter now in our commitment to a stronger defense."

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, opposes both Star Wars and any other new buildup of nuclear weapons. Why? For the simple reason that it has no interest in going to war with the United States and doesn't want to spend a trillion rubles duplicating Star Wars. Its planned economy, which long ago eliminated unemployment and production for profit, has far more productive uses for the money.

Working people in the United States want peace. But neither Star Wars nor disarmament talks will bring it.

We must start with the fight against the specific U.S. imperialist war going on right now in Central America. There can be no peace until Washington pulls all its troops, planes, and warships out of Central America and the Caribbean and stops its aid to the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries and the Salvadoran dictatorship.

Within this framework, we should demand that Washington halt the testing and production of nuclear arms and stop the testing and development of weapons for outer space.

The April 20 demonstration in Washington — called to oppose both the U.S. nuclear buildup and U.S. intervention in Central America — is a good place to begin.

Crucial role of family farmers in U.S. agriculture

The big-business media is on a campaign to convince working people that the forcible eviction of family farmers from their land is a natural, inevitable process. But, as the following excerpts from the article "Forging a fighting worker-farmer alliance" by Doug Jenness explain, family farmers, far from being outmoded, play a crucial role in agricultural production in the United States.

The article appears in the spring 1985 issue of *New Internationalist*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. This issue of *New Internationalist* is available for \$4.00 from 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

In the 1930s farmers and their families made up one-fourth of the U.S. population; today they account for about 3 percent. At first glance, this sharp decline in the number of family farmers in the United States might make it appear that an alliance with these producers is no

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

longer the strategically decisive question for the U.S. working class that it was four or five decades ago. This notion has been reinforced by the myth that all of those independent commodity producers on the land who have not already been wiped out and replaced by industrial, factory-type farms certainly will be in the not-too-distant future.

A careful look at the facts, however, underlines the continuing strategic importance for the working class of an alliance with working farmers. Independent family farmers continue to account for the greatest portion of labor expended in agricultural production.

Why hasn't all agriculture gone over to the industrial form of organization? Why don't the big monopolies just take over all the wheat, corn, and soybean farms and the dairy herds, establish massive "factories in the fields," and hire wage labor to work them?

One reason is that under the present setup the capitalists can get the working farm family to take most of the risks — the burden of crop failures, unstable market conditions, high interest rates, and taxes. Furthermore, members of the farm family who labor on the farm are not paid by the hour. Because the farm is theirs, they put out a tremendous amount of work — 14 to 16 hours a day, six or seven days a week if necessary during the harvest.

As Karl Marx had already explained some 135 years ago, independent commodity production on the land more and more becomes "the pretext that allows the capitalist to draw profits, interest and rent from the soil, while leaving it to the tiller of the soil himself to see how he can extract his wages," that is, the income needed to support his family.

As property owners and as owners of the product they produce, working farmers feel responsible for maintenance and improvement of the farm — its buildings, machinery, livestock, and land — and for organizing production. Aside from the economic benefits thus accruing to big capital, this arrangement is skillfully used by the capitalists to advance their political ends, as well. They try to get working farmers to see themselves as fellow businessmen, as a social group pitted against wage workers, and as a conservative and "responsible" property-holding layer in society.

Big capital is aware that when it directly takes over farming operations, it risks disruptions in production from dissatisfied workers who attempt to organize collectively and engage in strike action. In agriculture a few days' disruption can mean the loss of an entire crop.

When working farmers are squeezed until they are forced off their farms, it is only in the exceptional case that the land becomes part of a capitalist "factory in the field." Occasionally such land is withdrawn from agriculture for use in housing, shopping centers, or other commercial development. Most often, however, it is either rented or sold out to neighboring farmers, or to another farm family that takes over, shoulders the risks, and tries to make a go of it. The banks and commercial capitalists continue raking in profits.

In addition, the monopolists often prefer to sink their funds into sectors of production with a more rapid turnover of capital than that dictated by the growing seasons associated with most agricultural commodities.

Thus the profit advantages to big capital of maintaining independent commodity production frequently outweigh those that would accrue from economies of scale on large capitalist-run farms. Moreover, in some areas of agricultural production there is no reason to assume that production on a larger scale would in and of itself be more efficient, or even as efficient, as it is on the average under existing smaller scale conditions.

The CBS, Westmoreland coverup

The capitalist media is still debating who came out ahead when Gen. William Westmoreland threw in the towel in his libel suit against CBS in exchange for a public assurance that CBS did not consider him unpatriotic.

To defend itself in the \$120 million suit, CBS did put military witnesses on the stand who substantiated the network's claim that Westmoreland had deliberately falsified the strength of the Vietnamese liberation forces during the U.S. government's invasion of that country.

But CBS carefully avoided baring the real purpose behind the general's lies. To begin with, when Westmoreland sent his doctored reports to Washington, he wasn't lying to Pres. Lyndon Johnson and the Congress. He — together with the president and Congress — was lying to the people of this country.

These lies had two aims. One was to minimize the strength of the Vietnamese forces in order to bolster Washington's claim that it was winning the war.

But the main purpose of the lies was to conceal from the U.S. people the true nature of the brutal war they had been dragged into by the government.

Washington's propaganda claim was that the GIs were there to defend a "free" South Vietnam against an invasion by troops from North Vietnam.

But the reality was that the North Vietnamese troops were supporting a highly popular war being waged by the National Liberation Front (NLF) of South Vietnam. That war was directed against the profit-hungry landlords of South Vietnam, against a series of murderous totalitarian regimes installed by Washington — and against U.S. occupation.

Westmoreland stubbornly refused to include the NLF's hundreds of thousands of part-time fighters in his estimates of "enemy" strength. In his trial he dismissed them as old men, women, and boys who added nothing to the opposition's fighting capacity.

To have included them would have been an admission that U.S. troops were arrayed against a powerful movement for national liberation.

These were the peasants who planted rice by day and took up the gun by night. They transported food and materiel, dug fortifications, planted an endless variety of lethal booby traps, and proved to be deadly nighttime snipers.

These forces, like the Vietnamese people as a whole, proved unbeatable even in the face of U.S. chemical warfare, saturation bombings, and repeated wholesale massacres of civilians.

Despite the attempted coverup at the time, growing numbers of people in this country — seeing the remarkable Vietnamese resistance — did begin to realize what was involved in the war. And that was even more true among the GIs, who found themselves confronting not "communist aggressors" — as Washington claimed — but an entire people ready to fight for their liberation without regard to the cost.

That growing realization of the true nature of the Vietnam war contributed greatly to fueling antiwar sentiment among the GIs and among civilian working people as well. And today, Washington is creating a new Vietnam in Central America, one that will arouse at least as much resistance among the targets of the aggression.

GE workers condemn company's ties to apartheid

BY ELLEN BERMAN

In response to the growing local and national protests against the apartheid regime in South Africa, Black members of the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE) Local 201 at the General Electric plant in Lynn, Massachusetts, recently brought in a series of resolutions. They proposed that the local become active in anti-apartheid demonstrations.

The resolutions provoked a lively discussion, both before and during the union meeting. Following the discussion, the local voted overwhelmingly, 1. "to demand that

UNION TALK

the General Electric Co. divest its holdings in South Africa," and 2. "that Local 201 officers and executive board members support the actions of pickets against apartheid in South Africa who protest in front of the Foreign Exchange Building in Boston."

As part of the discussion, a lot of facts got out about the role of GE in propping up the racist, antilabor apartheid system in South Africa. GE employs approximately 5,000 people in South Africa and pays them only \$140 per month, one local member reported. He also told the meeting that GE is developing a satellite surveillance system that would enable the South African white minority regime to closely monitor the entire nonwhite majority population.

It was also pointed out that GE attempts to use against its U.S. workers the fact that it pays low wages at its South Africa operations. The company tries to blackmail

U.S. workers, threatening to move production and jobs to somewhere cheaper if our unions demand "too much" in our fight for decent wages and working conditions.

Another member described his experiences as a U.S. marine during a stay in South Africa. While off duty he went out drinking with some buddies at a bar, where they became friendly with some Black South Africans. When they all left together, the U.S. servicemen were promptly arrested for the "crime" of being white and riding in the same taxi as their new friends. He and other workers at the union meeting described the similarities between South Africa today and the Jim Crow system of legalized segregation in the South in this country before the victories of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s.

One member had been a former teacher in the African country of Botswana. From his travels in South Africa he was able to describe the apartheid system firsthand. He explained that the government's Pass Laws and African "homelands" policy totally regulate and restrict the movement of the nonwhite South African population.

Several workers at the meeting raised questions about whether South African apartheid was a trade union issue. One worker asked, "Don't they have their own unions? Why doesn't their own union do something?"

In response to these questions, members explained how the Black trade unions in South Africa suffer severe repression and were illegal until recently. Part of the reason for the recent upsurge of protest activity, local members explained, was a response to the jailing of 21 trade union leaders. These victimizations led the trade union movement in South Africa to send out a plea for solidarity from their brothers and sisters around the world.

Other workers stressed the complete dependency of the apartheid regime on the political and financial backing of U.S. corporations and the U.S. government. The union movement in this country has the obligation to expose the real character of the apartheid regime and to counter the role of GE and the government.

At the meeting members passed out copies of an article from a recent issue of *IUE News*, the publication of the international union. It described the participation of national IUE officers in the anti-apartheid demonstrations in Washington, D.C. IUE Local 201 *News* later featured an article describing the discussion and resolutions adopted at the meeting.

The same issue carried an article reporting the resolution adopted by the IUE national convention last September in support of the STECEL workers in El Salvador. These workers are union leaders who had been jailed on frame-up charges. A campaign by the union movement internationally, including the IUE, had been successful in forcing their release. The paper ran a letter to the editor that gave an update reporting on the success of the STECEL campaign in winning the leaders' release.

The lively political discussion about South Africa, the role abroad of U.S. corporations such as GE, and about the importance of trade union solidarity throughout the world was a welcome addition to the usual order of business at the local meetings.

GE unionists who oppose apartheid and the U.S. war drive in Central America are looking forward to continuing these discussions with coworkers. They hope to involve the union in building the April 20 antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C., which is being held to demand an end to apartheid and the U.S. war in Central America.

LETTERS

'Dirty thirty'

I am writing to try to explain the situation that we striking miners find ourselves in here in Leicester, England.

I don't know if you have heard of us, but we are known as "the dirty thirty," because there are only 30 men on strike here in Leicester, and over 2,000 scabs.

We have been on strike since March 1984 and will remain on strike until the end.

We have suffered tremendous pressure from the scabs and the Tory police, but they can't take our pride, and that's what hurts them more than anything.

But because our area is working, and our so-called area [union] official is a scab of the highest order, we don't get any help from the national hardship fund. We are not the only area in this position, but due to fantastic support from trade unions in this country and many others, we "dirty thirty" have been able to send food and money in excess of £2,000 to the areas that need it most, since we are in a position to know where it is needed most.

We are in a class war, and we intend to win. But without help from other sources it becomes virtually impossible to do. So if in any way you can help us, we would be more than grateful. Any money sent will be spent on the needy strike families. Checks can be made out to: Leicester Striking Miners, 24 Aber Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2-2BA, England.

Dave Douglas
Leicester, England

Indiana Labor Council

In October 1983 I became a delegate to the South Central Indiana Central Labor Council from Local 15, International Chemical Workers Union. I didn't know what the council was, but what I saw made it seem not much more than a local arm of the Democratic Party.

As time went on and the council became increasingly aware that Mondale was going to lose, the council leadership increased its pressure on the delegates to actively support the Democratic Party. I finally just skipped the last two meetings of 1984.

The next council meeting I went to was in January. At that meeting I reported that there was a demonstration being planned for April 20 in Washington, D.C., to oppose the U.S. war drive in Central America, for a nuclear freeze, jobs, and against South African apartheid. I explained that some of us in our local were trying to build support for the demonstration.

The council decided not to hold the annual labor banquet on April 20 because it conflicted with the demonstration date.

A discussion took place in the council about the idea of the council forming its own, local independent political party. This discussion arose because the local Democrats who had won in the elections had stabbed the council in the back.

I hope that labor councils and unions throughout the country are beginning to discuss the need for labor's own party.

Jim Horn
Floyds Knobs, Indiana

Educate against 'porn'

Pat Grogan's article on why women's rights fighters should oppose "anti-porn" laws was very clear and accurate. However, I think there is a need to explain how to educate against pornography.

The place most women encounter pornography is in the workplace. Pornography is used to isolate and exclude women from places they don't "belong" or to make their time at work as uncomfortable as possible.

The best thing women can do is bring the issue of pornography to their union and explain how it can be used by the bosses to pit union brother against union sister. The issue of pornography is a clear way to show how fighting women's oppression is in the union's best interest.

For example, in a factory where I worked, women complained about the large amount of pornography displayed. Supervisors were sent in to dramatically tear down all "suggestive" material. This created an atmosphere of male worker against female worker. Men felt their rights had been violated because their "property" had been destroyed and women found themselves more isolated than before. Meanwhile the company made a big deal out of what champions of women's rights they were!

Unionists need to take the issue of pornography straight on in their unions, with their coworkers, and in the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and not trivialize its effects.

Every woman should have the right to a job free of intimidation, and male coworkers need to learn that they are playing into the hands of the bosses when they use pornography to intimidate female coworkers.

Dee Scalera
Barcelona, Spain

Criminal contempt

A 52-year-old Chicago woman was recently found dead in her home. She was discovered frozen to her kitchen floor.

Apparently, a profit-hungry utility company had turned off her heat for nonpayment of bills. It's a very sad testimony to any society when profits are coldly and callously placed over people.

Public utility companies who deliberately shut off power, resulting in the death of any individual, should be held in criminal contempt, if not in a court of law, then in the heart of the people.

Dave Burford
Kirkwood, Missouri

Likes Marx

I recently completed a reading of Karl Marx's first volume of *Capital* and I felt that I must render a defense of him and his works in the face of the many criticisms leveled against Marx and his "discovery" of the processes of capitalist production — all of them leveled by critics who never have read any unadulterated Marx and if they did read it, could scarcely collect the power to understand it.

What is today labeled as "Marxism" — as if he invented all that he wrote, saw, and discovered — can actually be seen by anyone whose misfortune it is to live one's life day by day faced with the gross realities of capitalist production. So what is labeled "Marxism" is nothing more than capitalism that has been exposed by Marx.

Marx was a brilliant analyst with a beautiful wit, keen and sharp. He throws no interpretation into the facts — the facts are merely stripped of the sheen and their mysticism and publicly aired for all to see.

We thank you, brother! We thank you, very much!
Eddie Meredith
Caneyville, Kentucky



Nothing to lose

The *Militant* is very informative and educational and is essential in the advocacy of the interests of the working-class people.

There can never be democracy for the poor and oppressed class under the system of monopoly capitalism.

When the oppressed class can start conceiving of a society without capitalists and capitalist exploitation therein lies the future for the reconstruction of a new society which is not based on the exploitation of man by man.

The prison question is also a very important facet of the working-class struggle. Prisoners are victims of social injustice and within these dark prison cages lies a dormant potential of vanguard leaders who will respond to the call for working-class revolution. We have nothing to lose but our chains, and we have a world to win!

A prisoner
Tennessee Colony, Texas

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. Where possible the fund also tries to fill prisoners' requests for other literature. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N.Y. 10014.

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Alabama Black leaders face jail

20 years after Selma march, new attacks on voting rights

BY MARK CURTIS

MARION, Ala. — An important rally for Black rights was held here February 17 to defend Black activists falsely charged with voting fraud.

The rally was part of a major defense campaign fighting a broadside attack on Black political rights conducted by the state and federal governments.

Berean Baptist Church was packed with more than 300 Blacks protesting the indictment of Albert Turner, Evelyn Turner, and Spencer Hogue, Jr. — now known as the "Perry County Three." The three are veterans of the civil rights movement and led the fight for voting rights in this small town and throughout Perry County.

Perry County is part of the Black Belt, named after the rich, black soil stretching across west-central Alabama. Many of the counties here with majority-Black populations have begun to elect Blacks to local offices and the state legislature in an attempt to gain better conditions in what is one of the poorest areas of the state.

But the U.S. Department of Justice, the FBI, and the State of Alabama are framing up and locking up Black leaders in order to halt and roll back the fight for Black political representation.

The same laws that were supposed to protect voting rights are now being used by the FBI to arrest and jail activists like the Turners and Hogue.

The indictments of the Perry County Three are aimed right at the heart of Black rights in the Deep South. This attack comes almost 20 years to the day after the historic Selma-to-Montgomery march of 1965, which began in Marion and was led by Albert Turner. Turner served as director of the Alabama Southern Christian Leadership Conference from 1965 to 1972, and was general manager of the Southwest Alabama Farmers Cooperative Association, a Black farmers organization.

At the February 17 rally Turner recollected leading the Selma march of 1965, which was brutally attacked by cops. Many people at the February 17 rally were also in that 1965 march with Turner, and by their spirited response it was clear they plan to stand by him today as well.

The U.S. government, said Turner, "wants to take us off the map, but we have map makers here tonight. They can never jail us all."

Albert Turner and his wife Evelyn were joined at the rally by their son Albert Jr. He attacked the justice system in the United States that "conspires to lock up the Black man" who fights for his rights and "gives a medal to Bernhard Goetz" for shooting Blacks on a New York subway.

Wendell Paris, chairman of the Black Belt Defense Committee, explained to the rally that federal, state, and city officials have "joined hands to disenfranchise Blacks. We watched whites steal election after election, while the FBI did nothing." The recent investigations started only after Blacks began winning elections. The charges allege tampering with absentee ballots.

Paris, who is also chairman of the Sumter County School Board, expects that he will be indicted soon along with activists in other counties. He offered evidence of vote fraud by racist government officials and produced a letter written on a judge's stationery that solicited phony absentee ballots to "help keep certain people from taking over the county."

But the FBI has ignored this evidence and continues to investigate only Black absentee ballots, Paris said, even though proportionately many more whites than Blacks voted with absentee ballots.

The executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Rev. Joseph Lowery, pointed to the hard-won



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., leads 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery, Alabama, march that was key to winning passage of Voting Rights Act. Today, veteran civil rights leaders are facing frame-ups on charges of "vote fraud."

victory in defending Maggie Bozeman and Julia Wilder of Pickens County, Alabama, who were convicted of vote fraud in 1979 in a case similar to the Turners'. Those convictions were overturned.

The state and FBI are quick to indict Blacks on "vote fraud," said Lowery, but "nobody has been indicted yet for the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church," in Birmingham in 1963, which killed four Black girls attending Sunday school.

John Lewis, another leader of the Selma-to-Montgomery march of 1965 and protests in nearby Dallas County, recalled his speech at the 1963 March on Washington. "I mentioned then the indictment of Slater King and C.D. King in Albany, Georgia, and I asked, 'Which side is the federal gov-

ernment on?' And now I ask again, 'Which side are they on?'"

The importance of defending the Perry County Three was outlined at the rally by state Sen. Hank Sanders, in a report entitled "State of the Black Belt."

As defense efforts are stepped up, the racist witch-hunt gets more vicious. On February 7, Hogue was arrested by federal agents and charged with attempting to influence a witness in the vote-fraud case. Hogue's lawyer, Robert Turner, said he expects to receive from the government a list of potential witnesses who will be off limits for Hogue to associate with.

Albert Turner commented, "They are trying to cut off our communication from the community and stop us from earning our livelihoods. Both Spencer and I sell in-

surance; this gag ruling will prevent us from talking to people about buying insurance."

To help organize support for the Perry County Three, the Alabama Black Belt Defense Committee has been established to publicize the case, intensify voter registration, and organize direct action in support of those indicted. It was also announced at the rally that attorney Howard Moore, who successfully defended Angela Davis, has agreed to represent the Turners and Hogue.

Defense rallies around the state will continue.

You can help the defense effort by contacting the Alabama Black Belt Defense Committee, P.O. Box 5, Gainesville, Ala. 34564. Or contact Wendell Paris by phone at (205) 652-6298.

Houston: sanctuary workers convicted

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY

HOUSTON — A two-day trial ended here February 21 in convictions for two Rio Grande Valley sanctuary workers on charges of aiding refugees fleeing the terror of El Salvador's U.S.-backed government.

Jack Elder was convicted of conspiracy, aiding and abetting aliens entering the country, and transporting them. He faces up to 30 years in prison and fines of up to \$28,000. Stacey Merkt, acquitted of the transporting charges, could be sentenced to five years in prison and \$10,000 in fines.

Elder was acquitted on similar charges in Corpus Christi. Merkt is on probation from a

May conviction and may have that probation revoked at a March 15 hearing. Sentencing for the February 21 convictions is set for March 27 in Brownsville.

Merkt and Elder are staff workers at Casa Oscar Romero in San Benito, Texas, which provides food, shelter, and emergency medical care for about 140 to 180 refugees.

Following their convictions, Elder pledged they would continue their work at Casa Romero.

"As a member of the sanctuary community, and one of the growing numbers of Americans who are repulsed by the war we are waging in El Salvador, I am proud to be able to live my life in a way that allows my own alleged illegal actions to illuminate our nation's shameful policies," Elder explained to the press during the trial.

Fifty people turned out for an emergency picket line at the Federal Building to protest the convictions the day after the trial ended.

The coalition organizing a regional April 20 antiwar demonstration in Houston to support the Washington, D.C., mobilization for peace, jobs, and justice, has added a demand for a halt to the deportation of Central American refugees and for an end to the prosecution of sanctuary workers.

Elder and Merkt have also received support from Catholic Bishop John Fitzpatrick of the Rio Grande Valley and Bishop Joseph Fiorenza of the Galveston-Houston diocese. "They are not smuggling people into this country. They are extending love and friendship for people fleeing for their

lives," said Bishop Fiorenza.

The government's primary witnesses at the trial were two Salvadorans arrested by a U.S. Border Patrol agent on November 21 as they traveled by bus from the Rio Grande Valley to Houston. The two pointed to Merkt and Elder as the individuals who had made their transportation possible.

In answer to defense questions as to why he had left his country, José Mendez Valle said that no one's life is safe in El Salvador. He described seeing a bus stopped by Salvadoran government authorities where passengers were checked for proper identification. Those without were executed on the spot. He said that in his home town, it is common to see mutilated bodies left seated on park benches.

The defense established that Mendez believed that if he cooperated with the Immigration and Naturalization Service that he and his companion would be allowed to remain in this country.

At a February 19 news conference, Diane Elder, head of the Rio Grande Defense Committee, explained that the sanctuary work is clearly within the law. The Reagan administration, not sanctuary workers, are violating the U.S. Refugee Act of 1980 and international laws established by the Geneva Convention and the United Nations, she said. These laws give refugees fleeing political persecution the right to protection.

For more information or to help, contact the Rio Grande Defense Committee, 1615 W Kuhn, Edinburg, Texas 78539.



Stacey Merkt and Jack Elder vowed to continue aid to refugees from El Salvador despite having been convicted.